Miles Key 57

"TREASURE ISLAND"—1918-1919

An Exploration of the Isle of Pines, West Indies

By Stephen Chalmers

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THE PEARL ON THE PENDANT

December 9th, 1918. For the last fifteen minutes the engine-room bell has been responding to the touch of the master in the darkened pilot-house, and one is conscious of something of interest transpiring on deck. Most of the passengers are still asleep, tired perhaps after "seeing" Havana, or taking advantage of the balmy December air and the quiet waters of this over-night trip from Batabano after crossing Cuba by rail from Havana.

But although dawn is still an hour off, a few of those mortals who would rather miss sleep than something equally worth while are on the forward deck, watching in silent fascination the passage of the "Cristobal Colon" through the *cayos* that fringe the Island.

On deck it is dark after the brilliance of the electricity in the cabin. Only the heavens seem clear — a great purple bubble, washed overnight and sprinkled with fresh stars. The sea is black, no break in it visible until suddenly a ghostly finger of light shoots out from the pilot-house roof. Unerringly the search-ray finds its mark — a red arrow upon a stake. Almost instantly the finger passes to another mark to the right, a blue diamond of wood on another stake.

The "Colon's" prow swings; the bell sounds the master's word to the engineer; and the smart little steamer slows as if habit had taught it human intelligence. Suddenly the ray leaps ahead, revealing to the astonished eyes — land! Not a stone's throw away it appears, spectral in the white light that bathes it. It is El Cayo de la Cruz. As swiftly it vanishes as the steamer swings again. Presently the searchlight goes out like a snuffed candle and the "Cristobal Colon" speeds over an inner sea that is shallow and still.

The cayos are passed. For a few moments one has enjoyed that touch of adventure which adds spice to travel, while secretly knowing that it is child' the master in the darkened pilot-house. There is of romance, too. The great namesake of the threaded this same passage and discovered the Pines, whose mountain tops, seen from far that curiosity which gave to posterity a New World.

Away over to the east the horizon rim becomes faintly visible before a first suffusion of dawn. The sea is so calm that the reflected stars hardly move in it. One can hear the long-drawn sigh of the steamer's cut-water where it turns a phosphorescent wave to right and left. In such a sea the ladies, even if they are missing something on deck, must be sleeping well. This is the quiet bosom of sea within a chain of *cay* which sweeping downward from the neck of Cuba, are like stones in some jeweled necklace, the pendant of which men say is the original of Stevenson's "Treasure Island."

One smiles at first. Perhaps the great Robert Louis never even heard of the Isle of Pines; but on the other hand he must have run across the story of Latrobe, the Gulf pirate, and the burying of his hoard somewhere among these islands. Unconsciously he brought the "His-

paniola's" rascally crew here to dig it up. No doubt it was long John Silver who conned the ship through that passage, while Jim Hawkins watched from the forward deck, all agog to get ashore and see the place. Every one of us this morning is a Jim Hawkins more or less.

The suffusion in the east spreads, but still no land appears against it. The Island must be over there to starboard, where it is still dark — very dark close to the sea. Possibly that black shadow is the Island. The group on the forward deck whisper with a curious boyish excitement, while they wait and watch for the first sight of it.

For if this is not the actual "Treasure Island" of story fame it has at least more to recommend its claim than Tobago that the latter is Robinson Crusoe's Island. Here is a spot with a history of romance and adventure which must ever delight the heart that keeps young. Smugglers, slave-traders, picaroons, buccaneers and Spanish Dons are written all over the scroll. Certainly John Silver is conning the "Cristobal Colon" this early morning Or possibly it is Drake, sailing in to sack the Island by way of further "singeing the beard" of the Spanish King. Or be the swarthy, ring-ear'd Latrobe, bringing his 00 loot of the galleons to his lair in Vivijagua

an hour of dreaming on a placid sea under the ming stars. The search-ray again pierces the uncertain night ahead and again the eye glances from red arrow to blue diamond in another series of stakes marking the entrance to the River Júcaro. And some minutes later the glancing eye of flame lingers for a few seconds on either bank of a wide estuary — banks green with mangroves, with palmettos thrusting stencilled heads blackly against the brightening skies.

The speed of the vessel diminishes. Its cut-water merely whispers. Land odors float off-shore, and to the ears comes the crowing of cocks and the barking of a dog. A light appears ahead. It is the wharf of Júcaro, the port of the inland town of Santa Fé, the first stop of the steamer in order to discharge passengers for that section. The stop is brief and we go on to Nueva Gerona, the Island's modern capital.

As the vessel leaves the river to continue its course the dawn has spread all over the skies. The tops of inland hills are tinted with old rose and gold. In the clear light the land on either side of the river we leave is startlingly green — dense walls of verdant jungle that somehow suggest a page out of a Conrad novel, a fit setting for a Conrad tale of tropic rivers.

Once outside the Júcaro estuary the steamer makes full speed in a general westerly direction toward the capital. One may be eager in curiosity to set foot on shore, but for the moment one is satisfied to sit in the *al fresco* dining-deck under the awnings aft and drink in, with coffee, the beauty of the panorama presently unfolded.

The sun rolls up over our wake, a golden ball in a clear blue sky. The gentle warmth of this December morn is delicious after the bleak north. The light floods over the Island, throwing the Caballos mountains into brilliant relief or deep blue shadows — mountains clothed with palm-starred jungle with here and there great precipices of marble out-cropping.

Bay succeeds bay, incurving to white beaches backed by groves of royal palms. Among these nestle, now the thatched roofs of Pinero huts, now deep-veranda'd American bungalows surrounded by groves of orange or grapefruit. In the foreground is the sea, sparkling, scintillating in the sunlight, blue around the ship, but changing through many shades of opal and green to where it bursts pure white on the sands or breaks in spray around the rocks of projecting mountain ledges.

A fair scene — an animated scene; for here both bird and fish skim the surface of the sea. An inspiring scene for the practical man as well as the dreamer. To the former it is a place to be explored for its industrial and commercial possibilities; to the dreamer a mine of historic interest.

The practical man on the after-deck is interested no doubt in the soil below those rain-washed ravines, the mineral possibilities of those rocky mountains, the utilization of those wide savannahs stretching away on either side of the Caballos and the Casas Range beyond. The rather pale lady in the deck-chair forward is wondering perhaps if this is the place where she will regain health and feel once more some interest in being alive. And, without any doubt whatever, that lad over there by the rail, who is staring so intently at Vivijagua Bay and its neighbor, Columpo Bay, is reconstructing in imagination the shadowy ships of Drake, Lafitte, Latrobe, Morgan,

WINTER SCENE VIVIJAGUA BEACH

the Spanish captains and the Admiral himself — the undaunted Columbus who made his landing right over there one day in June, 1494, and changed the Indian name of the Island, Camaraco, to the Isle of the Evangelist, in honor of St. John, whose day it was.

But on this morning of the twentieth century re-discovery your latest explorer is saying to himself:

"So this is the Isle of Pines!"

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

December 12th. Three days have elapsed since the explorer laid aside his pen — three days in which so much has been crowded that only now, in the quiet leisure of Santa Fé, the Island's first capital and the oldest Spanish settlement, is this explorative narrative taken up where it was left off.

Entering the Rio de las Casas, two miles from the mouth of which is situated Nueva Gerona, the modern capital, natural beauty of scenery gives way to the picturesque of ancient Spain, combined with a certain up-to-date liveliness for which the American colonists are mainly responsible.

Bidding goodbye to the steamer, which will presently return over its thrice-a-week course between Batabanó and the Isle of Pines, we set foot in Nueva Gerona and are at once struck with several favorable points of dissimilarity from the usual Latin-American city.

This town is as well laid out as any American town of its size. The streets, running in parallels, are broad and the shady piazzas are spacious; unlike Havana, where the narrow *calles* and sidewalks are a serious drawback to comfort, pleasure and convenience.

But to the eye that loves color, Nueva Gerona (named so in honor of the Admiral's birthplace), with its red roofs, Spanish architecture, pink, yellow or blue-washed walls, is a picture of Old Castile done in miniature. The explorer could readily imagine that he is nearer La Mancha than the United States, nearer the 16th century than the 20th, were it not that here, at the very outset, appears the American face, American speech, the American hand-clasp, American energy and — the American smile!

For if there is one thing more than another that strikes the explorer at once it is this American smile. Call it what you will — fellow-feeling, good health, optimism, belief in himself, faith in today and tomorrow — it is certainly here. One may surmise that it is the usual welcome accorded strangers; but it outlasts Nueva Gerona; it accompanies the explorer wherever he (or, and more particularly, she) goes. It is a smile spread over the whole 600,000 acres of the Isand proper, and is permanent. It is a treasure in itself. There seem to be no "strangers" here.

Nueva Gerona, to be briefly statistical, is the seat of administration on the Isle of Pines. The population is about 2,500, although its floating population is larger, drawn as it is from the total population of the Island — about 5,000. During the winter season the population of the Island is considerably augmented by visitors from the north.

The town lies between the two mountain ranges of the north coast — the Caballos and the Casas — on a gently sloping plateau which allows for the good drainage necessary to healthful conditions.

Nueva Gerona itself offers unexpected facilities for the business of domestic living as well as of commerce. It has several schools, both private and public, besides the usual churches of different denominations. Its stores are run along American lines. Some things cost more, naturally; many things cost less.

The day of our exploration there it was not hot, a temperature of about 82° being tempered by the sea-breezes which sweep up the wide valley of the Casas River.

Among the usual institutions of a modern town, besides excellent stores, Nueva Gerona has good hotels, sound banking facilities, and a powerful wireless station which keeps the whole Island in quick touch with the world. Being the capital town, here is to be found the American Consul, also the departments of Cuban administration — courts, customs and the headquarters of the local police and rural cavalry. Nueva Gerona is also the headquarters of the Isle of Pines Steamship Co. and branches of the connecting lines via Havana with which it has business affiliations.

After all, with these facilities one is not so far from home.

But most newcomers are naturally anxious to start inland and see the Island which can support a capital of this kind. There are various smaller towns which may commend themselves for their particular charms or as centres of the business in which the visitor may be interested. Among these are the American colonies of Santa Barbara, McKinley, Santa Ana, Los Indios, San Pedro to the south-west of Nueva Gerona, and Santa Fé.

The usual method of transportation about the Island is by automobiles of the lighter type over excellent roads mainly constructed during the American administration of Cuba. So your explorer hires a car and a driver at very reasonable rates and sets forth on a tour of general observation.

At present it is quite possible to make a round-trip of the Island by car, although this may be accomplished more comfortably when presently the new government road is put through (or linked up) between Nueva Gerona through Santa Ana and Santa Barbara to Los Indios. The latter town has a deep-water dock, steamship connections and a growing export business. The whole island, however, including the curiously detached South Coast (see map), may be covered more leisurely by separate trips from some central point, such as Nueva Gerona, Santa Fé, Santa Barbara or Los Indios.

To one who has never seen the Island before, or is enjoying a first experience of the tropics, these trips must prove a succession of memorable surprises, pleasant pictures and result in a favorable impression of the Island generally.

For the most part the land is rolling, except for the two mountain ranges, the Caballos and the Casas in the northeast, the Sierra de la Daguilla in the southeast and the Sierra de la Cañada in the west.

The most prominent feature of the landscape is the pine-tree from which the Island gained its ultimate title, but this is interspersed with a variety of island *flora*. Everywhere the palm so truly named royal raises a majestic head, towering above everything else and even its own relations, the bottle palm, dwarf palm, manaca palm and other members of the same family, to say nothing of its distant cousin, the cocoanut, while ever the palmetto stars the roadside with its rustling crest. And, densely shadowing the many little rivers (*arroyos*) crossed by the roads, may be found every variety of plant that flourishes in the tropics, from orchids to tree-ferns and hardwoods. These *arroyos,* by the way, are a magnificent spectacle at night in certain seasons when the giant fireflies with their automobile-like headlights flash and blink intermittently.

Not only to the botanist but to the mere lover of exotic plants and fruits, the *flora* of the Island furnishes a never-ending source of delight. The East Indian mango, also, was not long a stranger here, it seems. It has come to stay. The rose-apple flourishes, besides *aguacate,* ("alligator" pears), guavas and other tropic fruits, the names of which mean little until the flavor has been sampled. And the bamboo, like its oriental neighbor, the mango, seems to like life on "Treasure Island," for it may be seen quite commonly, waving in the breeze like gigantic green ostrich feathers.

One looks for the snake in this Eden. It is there, no doubt, but apparently it is quite harmless. There is no case on record of anyone being bitten by one, much less suffering ill results. There seems, in fact, to be no reptile or insect here of a seriously poisonous nature.

But turning from the natural beauty of the Island (with some reluctance), one is attracted in this general first survey by what mere Adam is doing in his garden. Wherever one goes the labors of the American home-maker are visible. They stand out the more marked because his Cuban brother is indigenous to the soil, part of the landscape.

The American is here in every variety, from the settler of small means with his two or three acres of vegetables and a two or three-room cottage of native pine boards to the large grower with a splendid residence overlooking a great vista of flourishing grapefruit and orange groves.

And so the road winds around the Island, varying in prospect but always interesting. Now it is a natural landscape awaiting the newcomer's industry; again it is an artificial landscape, the work of the oldcomer's. Acres of citrus fruit trees, heavy with blossom or green-and-gold fruit; acres of vegetables ripening in mid-winter — tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, okras, beans, cabbages, etc.;

STEAMSHIP "CRISTOBAL COLON" APPROACHING HER DOCK AT NUEVA GERONA

here a factory extracting turpentine from the pine-trees, or a sawmill producing pine for fruit-crates and building material; again a factory for canning pineapples and vegetables, even the fish, lobsters and turtles in which the South Coast abounds. Cattle ranches, too — not many, but increasing as success points the line of success. And in one place a comparatively new plant is hewing marble out of the Sierra de las Casas.

So the road winds by Nueva Gerona, Santa Ana, El Bobo, McKinley, Santa Barbara, Los Indios, San Pedro, and around to Old Santa Fé, where your explorer again quits the pen— satisfied of three days well-spent.

LORE AND LEGEND

December 20th. After a week or two spent in any place the significance of things begins to sink in, to become fixed, to assume a certain color. But after such a short space of time your explorer is not yet ready to discuss the Island as a business proposition. He must, however, have absorbed the historic and romantic atmosphere of the Island. He cannot help it, especially if he is here for recreation and not business.

The pen is resumed after a swim in one of the Island's famous thermal magnesia springs. For thereby hangs a tale which inspires one of the many legends of the past in which "Treasure Island" is so rich. It is the Legend of Himairo. But, first, a brief review of the Island's history.

When Columbus discovered Camaraco it was inhabited by Indians who spent most of their time fishing or fighting. For three hundred years after the discovery it was more or less a resort for smugglers, buccaneers, slave-traders.

The slavers used it as a place to rest and fatten up negroes for the New Orleans market. Before that the buccaneers used it as a retreat in times of stress, a careening ground, or a place to hold high barbecue. Out of the Island's hidden coves and river-mouths these Knights of the Caribbee — such as Drake, Morgan, Pegleg Jols (or Jones), Latrobe and Lafitte — sallied against Spanish galleons, or even Havana and the cities of the Spanish Main coast.

The smugglers in their day found it a handy station to receive, from British ships out of Jamaica, goods that were slipped over to Cuba despite Spain's embargo against English trading. The Spanish owners of the Island were chiefly conspicuous by their prolonged absence.

In 1596 Sir Francis Drake, ever on the lookout to annoy Spain, descended on the Island, massacred a number of Spanish-Cubans who had settled on the coast and burned their village. Later the "Capital" moved inland. Another band of pirates (with all respect to Sir Francis) tramped the seven or eight leagues to Santa Fé and applied fire and sword to that, also.

Somewhere about 1630 the Island passed into private hands by royal grant. In 1716 it had become the property of two brothers, Nicolas and Francis Duarte. The descendants of one of these brothers sub-divided the Island and established seven great ranches. The Duartes ruled supreme for about 50 years after that, when the Island was finally governed as a political part of Cuba and a Captain-General was appointed to rule over a population of not over 275 souls.

This, however, included a drifting population of about 200 pirates and smugglers who provided the Captain-General with something to keep him awake between meals. A later Captain rounded up the rough element in 1780 and shipped them over to Havana for judicial disposal, which left the Island with a grand total population of 76.

The Island merely continued to exist until 1826, when the Spanish administration of Havana established a garrison (the present cuartel at Nueva Gerona), sent over a Commander-in-Chief and founded Nueva Gerona as the Island's capital.

About ten years after that a French geologist and (after him) Captain-General O'Donnell of Cuba, took steps to develop the marble resources of the Caballos mountains, but after some time the quarries were abandoned because of political strings pulled by rival business interests in Cuba and Spain.

In the meantime the Island had been turned into a penal settlement, long since abandoned, so that as is usually the case, the polite world of Cuba and Spain averted its eyes from the place. The events of 1898,

LOOKING DOWN THE CASAS RIVER

STREET SCENE, NUEVA GERONA

Lorenzo Escoba, Fernando?

however, raised the Isle of Pines as a sort of bone of contention.

Under the Treaty of Paris it was supposed to become American territory. President McKinley held that it was; so did Major-General Leonard Wood. The Hon. Elihu Root interpreted the Treaty otherwise, however, maintaining that it was, as it is still held, an integral part of Cuba.

But upon the first interpretation of the Treaty many Americans bought land here. Despite the fact that their dream of American territory was never realized, it remains that today 90 per cent of the whole island is owned by Americans and a corresponding percentage of all business is done by Americans.

This, in brief, indicates the high spots of the Isle of Pines history since the day Columbus sailed through the *cayos* and christened Camaraco the Isle of the Evangelist. Since the "American invasion," as it has been called, the Island has been, in all but political status, an American colony which keeps on going and growing under the Cuban flag.

But looking back over these years of Spanish Dons, buccaneers, smugglers, slave-traders and picaroons, one wonders how it could have been possible for Mr. Stevenson to escape *Isla de Pinos* when he was digging material for his "Treasure Island." He certainly read Drake's Narrative, and the Isle of Pines figures largely in that! Then, too, there is the Latrobe story* which is the legend of Vivijagua Bay, or Treasure Beach, as it is called today.

Latrobe, a Gulf pirate, French or of French descent, was partner of the notorious Jean Lafitte. They both made the Island a rendezvous. About 1809 Latrobe made a great haul in one day, capturing two Spanish ships and sinking them after he had removed a vast amount of gold in ingots from Panama. He was presently pursued by a Spanish man-o'-war which he eluded at the time. Then he was chased by an American corvette, but escaped that, also.

*NOTE:—It is interesting to learn that the author of this book is one of the founders and Executive Secretary of The Stevenson Society, an international literary organization which is supposed to be a sort of tribunal in Stevenson matters. His opinion on this point is at least highly interesting. He ought to know.—THE PUBLISHERS.

He then sailed for his lair, supposedly the Isle of Pines, buried the ingots together with the rest of his accumulated loot, gold altar ornaments, jewels, etc., amounting in value to $6,000,000. On the way out to sea again he was trapped by both the Spanish man-o'-war and the American corvette, taken to Kingston, Jamaica, and there hanged.

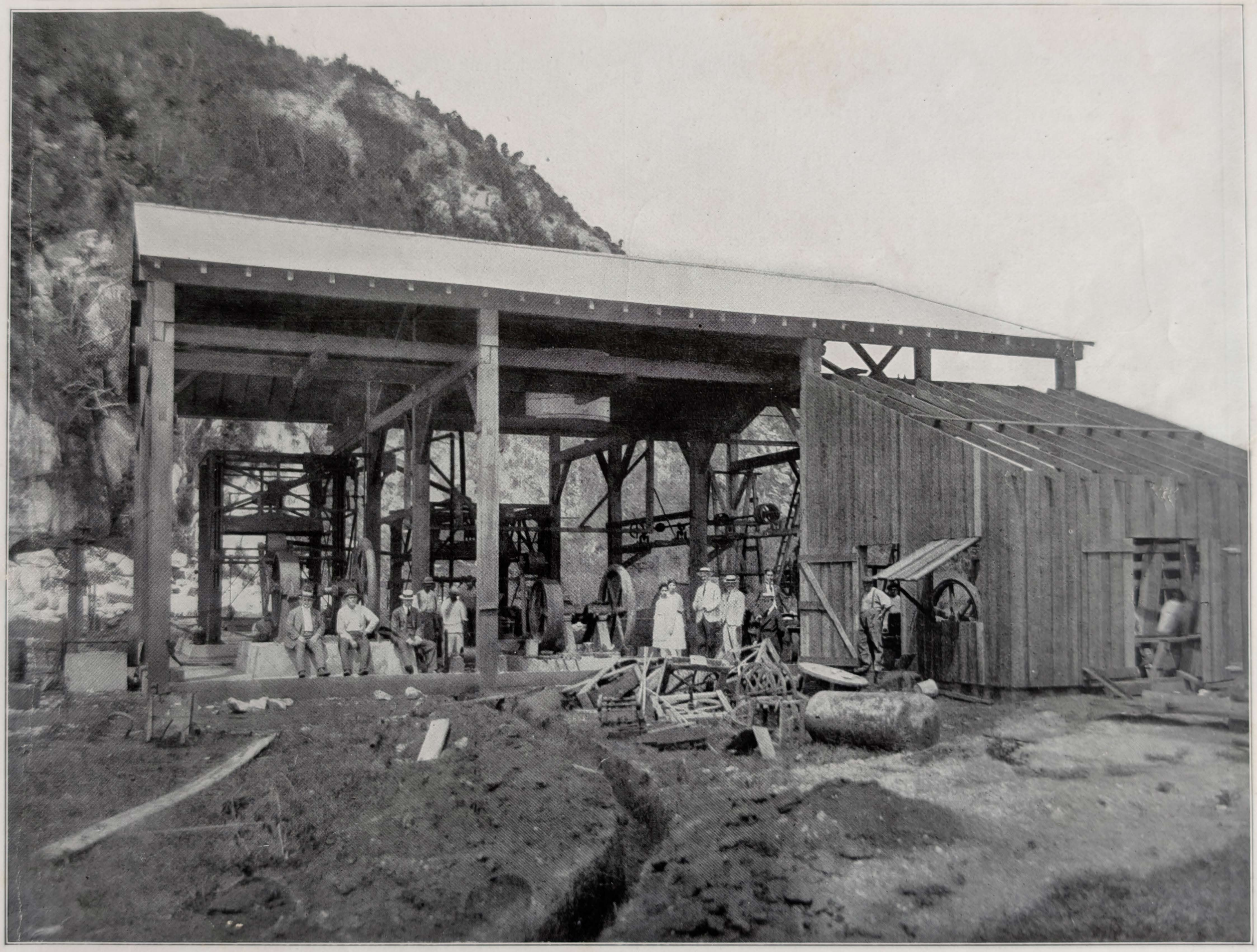
On the night before his execution Latrobe slipped a paper to his cabin-boy with instructions to take it to Lafitte. This paper is supposed to have contained explicit instructions for the finding of the buried loot which (by the honor of thieves) now became his partner's sole property. What became of the document nobody knows. Certainly Lafitte never got it, having met with a sad end himself in the meantime. It is supposed to have passed from hand to hand and to have been the cause of many treasure expeditions to the Isle of Pines and other islands which Latrobe frequented. All that is known of the document is that it stated the treasure was buried "90 feet from the head of a boiling spring."

Sounds like the Isle of Pines!

One treasure chest was located at Treasure Beach some years ago by a party of Americans; but it was significantly empty! Also, there is a bald spot on the west side of the Caballos where another party once did extensive digging. What they found is still shrouded in mystery.

The legend of Himairo, and the healing spring, which led to the exploration into island lore, is worthy of poetic framing. The Island is prolific in these thermal magnesia springs, the curative properties of which have been known ever since the days of Columbus. They are good for nervous troubles, insomnia, bronchial and pulmonary affections and quite a number of ailments. This tale of the origin of at least one of these springs might be termed the Hiawatha legend of the Island. It was probably old before Columbus came to Camaraco. Briefly:

Himairo was the son of Takamena, prince of Camaraco. He was a mere stripling, yet when his father was growing old and a tribal war broke loose Himairo was called to lead the warriors. The lad was a dreamer, a poet, a deep thinker. Instead of waging war against the enemy he went into their lodges and converted their chiefs to his theories of peace and brotherhood.



AN UP TO DATE MARBLE MILL IN PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION, WHERE A FINE QUALITY OF MARBLE IS MANUFACTURED INTO ALL FORMS

Upon the return of the warriors with this strange information, Himairo's father, misunderstanding, thinking his son a coward, killed him on the spot with his own spear. Then the Great Spirit sent a disease upon the tribe. When the people were all but decimated, out of the ground where Himairo's martyr blood had been spilled bubbled a warm spring, the waters of which healed the survivors of the tribe.

The spring which can rightfully lay claim to being the original of this beautiful legend should never lack visitors! But which of the many springs is it? The principal ones are at Nueva Gerona, Santa Barbara and Santa Fé. But there are many others.

And we must not forget that unidentified spring mentioned by Latrobe, with $6,000,000 buried just 90 feet from the head of it. They say that money has peculiar curative properties of its own.

THE COMMUNITY SPIRIT

February 2nd. A diary has been said to be the last refuge of the lonesome; which is probably why this one has been neglected. But somewhere back in these pages — about six weeks back — mention was made of the fact that there are no strangers on the Isle of Pines. Unless the newcomer be deaf, dumb and blind he cannot help becoming acquainted with an amazing number of new friends who seem old friends within a week.

In referring to social life on the Island your explorer does not necessarily mean the long-established, recognized social institutions which occur wherever two or three Americans are gathered together. These exist in all quantity to accommodate island civilization — churches, clubs, societies, charitable organizations, fraternal orders, chambers of commerce and other bodies tending to bind a community together.

It is — aside from all these — the neighborly spirit which makes life pleasant here. Even at the hotels it prevails, and anyone who has ever suffered the agony of seeing the golf-bags go forth, the motor and riding-parties start out and the tennis courts thronged by nice people to whom he has never been "properly introduced," will appreciate this virtue in "Treasure Island."

But, first, a word about these social and semi-social organizations.

Someone remarked the other day that the Island was a "paradise for women's clubs." Certainly no woman yearning for the companionship of her own sex need be lonely long on the Isle of Pines. Every colony on the Island — although it is all one colony in the end — has its women's club of some sort, although during the recent war they nearly all disbanded and formed Red Cross Chapters.

The churches, too — of all denominations there are — seem more social in their endeavor here than in many places. One admirable feature is that on this Island there is a Sunday-school for both adults and children. It knows neither sect nor section; that is, it recognizes both and all. It is a union of sects, sexes and sections. It meets every Sunday at an hour which will allow of the simple community services being over so that all may disperse in time for each to attend the church of his, or her, own denomination.

This is eloquent of the neighborly spirit; of which more presently.

Of the men's organizations there is little that need be said. The fraternal orders are here and the members are all "in good standing." There is a curious absence of the "stag" club which is not always conducive to the best happiness of the family in a limited community. Instead, the men of the Island get together and discuss ways and means to improve the Island, to acquire new information on agricultural methods and to further the best interests of one another.

Once a year they all get together and help to improve or repair the roads.

There are several minor boards of trade in the various "colonies," but most of these are affiliated with, or have membership in, a general body — the Isle of Pines Chamber of Commerce, which is representative of the most influential and energetic citizens from all parts of the Island. Among the duties of the secretary of this Chamber of Commerce is the answering of inquiries received from all parts of the United States and Canada relative to the Isle of Pines.

LOOKING FOR THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF FORMER PIRATES

But these conditions exist in most enterprising communities. What does not always occur is the remarkable human kindness of individuals, one toward the other and each toward the rest; the effort of all to make life mutually pleasant.

For instance, most of the residents of "Treasure Island" get about in automobiles. If it should happen that you are a newcomer and Fordless, the number of car-owners who appear to offer service, to take you here, to take you there, to show you this, to show you that, is rather astonishing. And it is difficult to discover that anyone has an axe to grind; it is simply the spirit of the Island.

When at the end of the day's work there is some social gathering over at Santa Barbara, or Santa Fé, or some other place twenty-odd miles away, there is always a serious conference of car-owners beforehand, so that none shall be absent or left behind because he (and his wife) had no means of getting there.

These gatherings are where the community spirit shines brightest. Everybody knows everybody else and the newcomer is the oldest friend of all. He goes back to where he came from, feeling the better for the experience.

More interesting still, as a pleasing study of human nature, is the pride with which a man relates of his farm, or vegetable garden, or citrus grove. And he will not be happy until he has made an appointment, brought along the inevitable Ford and whisked you off to see it — his grapefruit, his tomatoes, his pigs, his pineapples, his eggplants, or whatever it may be — on the principle, perhaps, that seeing is believing, and he does not expect you to believe it until you have seen it.

But it is this enthusiasm for what he has done with his own hands which in the first place enabled him to do it!

If, hereafter, your explorer should set down a few industrial and commercial facts about the Isle of Pines, he will have been enabled to gather his information and draw his conclusions simply from this honest, frank enthusiasm of every man on "Treasure Island" to show what he has done in the past, what he is doing today, and what he believes can be done in the future.

THE HOME-BUILDERS

March 14th. After carefully examining the ground one comes to the conclusion that there *is* treasure buried on the Isle of Pines and there is no question about the surest way to get at it. You must dig for it. If you can afford better than a spade, plough for it; if you can afford less, use a hoe. But you must get down to the ground and delve.

It is not in the shape of golden ingots, or jewels, or altar ornaments of solid gold. It is, to use a term, matter in suspension which forms a precipitate of gold when a few drops of honest sweat are added. And this gold, mined from the soil, is merely another name for the fruits of a fertile earth.

The rainfall is good and regular. But no one depends entirely upon rainfall. Dig and you will find treasure in the shape of water almost everywhere on the island at a depth of 15 feet to 25 feet. With water-supply for irrigation in emergency no crops have ever been lost on the Island through drought.

The Island is about 30 miles by 40, and every part of it is threaded by *calzadas*, or government roads — roads which are actually superior to the roads in the rural districts of the United States. And where the *calzada* is not directly available the Island is a labyrinth of other roads joining up with the smooth hard government highways. Automobile trucks provide freight transportation at reasonable rates.

The choice of land depends largely on the price and the speed with which returns are required. Some pioneers have bought land which was not especially rich but was easily cleared. Others, with longer heads or with longer purses, bought land which was heavily timbered — an evidence of good soil, and for the sake of the latter spent larger sums in the clearing.

It all depends on the financial resources of the pioneer. But these few months of general observation have indicated to the writer that the Island is peculiarly suited to the man of moderate means, the man who has no illusions about Utopia and El Dorado, save as those dreams may be realized by plain, hard work. It was in the course of this exploration that one of the most hard-

WOMAN'S ECONOMIC CLUB, SANTA BARBARA

working (and most successful) men on the Island made these remarks:

"Give me a man with $1,000 and a sensible wife and I will make a success of him, even if in a small way.

"That is," he added, "if she will be satisfied for a time with a two or three-room house and he will stick to the ground and not rush off to town every time the mail comes in!"

A frame house, such as our friend described, can be built for $300. For $1,000 a man might build a really commodious bungalow. And even as the settler of larger means may erect a "country seat" if he chooses, there are many well-known cases of poor but determined settlers who built houses of undressed lumber with their own hands.

In one case, at least, such a man succeeded. When his modest shack was surrounded by a thriving citrus fruit grove and a field of variegated vegetables he was asked why he did not put some of his profits into a better house.

"It's good enough," said he. "The wife and I are only at home nights and meal times!"

It is not essential that a man's wife should become a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, but your explorer has discovered a number of places on the Island where the wife (in a sun-bonnet) is as much an enthusiast about tomatoes, beans, eggplant, corn, pigs and poultry as her husband (in a Cuban sombrero) is about ploughing, hoeing and fertilizing the grapefruit grove.

For citrus fruit and vegetables are the main staples in agriculture on the Island, which is absolutely below the frost line. The success the former has achieved in the northern markets has encouraged grapefruit, and orange planting until now there must be nearly 10,000 acres of groves (inclusive of all varieties of citrus fruits) on the Island. The local steamship company takes the fruit to Batabanó over-night. It crosses Cuba by rail in two hours and catches the steamer northbound to New York, or travels via Mobile or New Orleans or ferry to Key West to Chicago and western points, reaching the main distributing centres in from 2½ to 5 days.

The market for citrus fruits especially for Isle of Pines grapefruit, is seldom glutted, and the shipping season lasts from August until as late as May in the following year. The most advantageous time for Isle of Pines fruit is between August 1st and October 15th, about which time Florida enters the market. During these ten weeks Isle of Pines fruit commands prices ranging from $4 to $8 per crate. An experiment in 1919 in the shipping of late fruit (in the month of May) resulted in the price of $6.50 per crate.

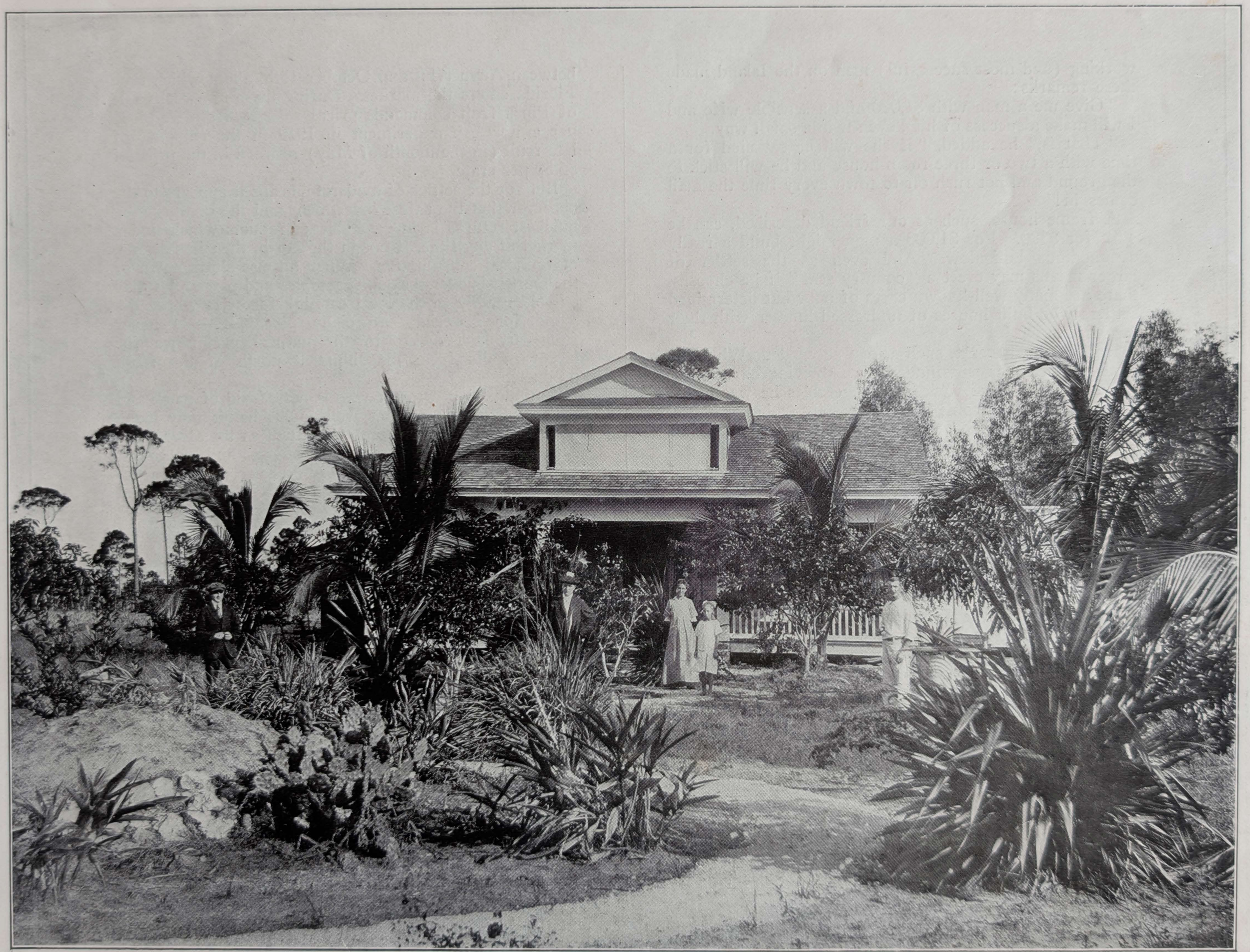
But for the settler of moderate means it appears to the observer that the safest investment and the one bringing quickest returns is in vegetables; products which find a market at any time, if not in the north, then in Havana, or for local consumption. When all else slows down or the market is overstocked, vegetables and pineapples may be sold readily to the local canning factories whose demand for material — especially pineapples — is never fully supplied, owing to the natural preference for larger profits from the shipment north of the fresh products.

An industrious grower who is not afraid of work and will employ his brains as well as his hands may make good money from his vegetables, such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, okra, potatoes, onions and cabbages. Bananas also can be sold locally and are always in demand. They grow well on the Island, if cared for, and form excellent shade trees for ground crops.

In conjunction with all agricultural propositions the raising of hogs is an extremely profitable side-issue. In fact, many are coming to regard this business as a money-maker on its own merits, aside from anything else. Raising poultry also is a paying enterprise, as the local demand for chickens and eggs exceeds the supply.

The opportunities for experimentation — ever the delight of the true lover of growing things — are almost unlimited on the Island. There is on this Island a variety of sisal called *sanseverria* (known to the natives as *Lengua de Vaca*, or Cow's Tongue) which is said to be far superior to the coarser sisal now used for making ropes and binding-twine. Experts in New York who have seen samples of this fine fibre from the Isle of Pines predict a future for it if it can be demonstrated that it will grow to a proper length.

Another thing that invites the experimenter is tobacco. The weed which has made Cuba world-famous grows equally well in the Isle of Pines. It requires study, however, in the proper care and handling of the leaf and



AMERICAN RESIDENCE

this is all that is necessary to equal success, although in a smaller way than Cuba's. Some bales sent recently from the Island to a Cuban cigar factory at Batabano were said by experts there to be as fine a leaf as they had ever seen.

And in passing, the lady of the home need never find time hang heavily when she can secure for herself a pretty little income from the making of jams, jellies, and preserves from the mangoes, guavas and various sorts of wild plums and other wild fruits in which the Island abounds in season, besides the ever-present citrus rind for making marmalade. These potted preserves have a ready sale without going further than the nearest dealer in groceries.

For the man of larger means, of course, the Island affords larger opportunities for capital and interest. The lumber industry seems to be attracting the attention of capitalists. The Island ships annually about 8,000,000 feet of pine lumber to Cuba besides millions of fabricated fruit-crates for the Cuban pineapple trade.

In the matter of minerals, many claims on copper, iron and even gold have been denounced from time to time and no doubt will be developed sooner or later. Manganese exists in large quantities. That mineral of sculptors and builders, the marble which attracted Captain-General O'Donnell in the old Spanish days, is again being cut from those north coast mountains in which there is an inexhaustible supply.

These may appear unromantic facts to those who visit the Island for the charms of its climate, beauty, history and atmosphere, but they should prove of interest to others who seek, not so much a fortune, as a pleasant place in which to live, to work and to achieve at least a moderate success and competence.

For the benefit of the latter these extended notes on various practical matters are entered here after a three months' study of the Isle of Pines.

BELOW THE FROST LINE!

April 23rd. It has been a delightful Winter! Hardly ever has the temperature been above 86° and there is always a breeze from the sea, which is but a half-hour's car-ride in any direction. Sometimes the temperature has dropped as low as 48°, they say, but 52° was our experience of the Winter minimum, and blankets were not unwelcome some nights. Yet the Island is always below the frost-line.

Presently the "wet" season will be upon the Island. Then it will rain, not continuously, or even for two days in succession, but showers will be frequent and the fresh-planted vegetables will swell and increase, and the citrus fruit trees past the blossoming stage, will fatten their green spheres.

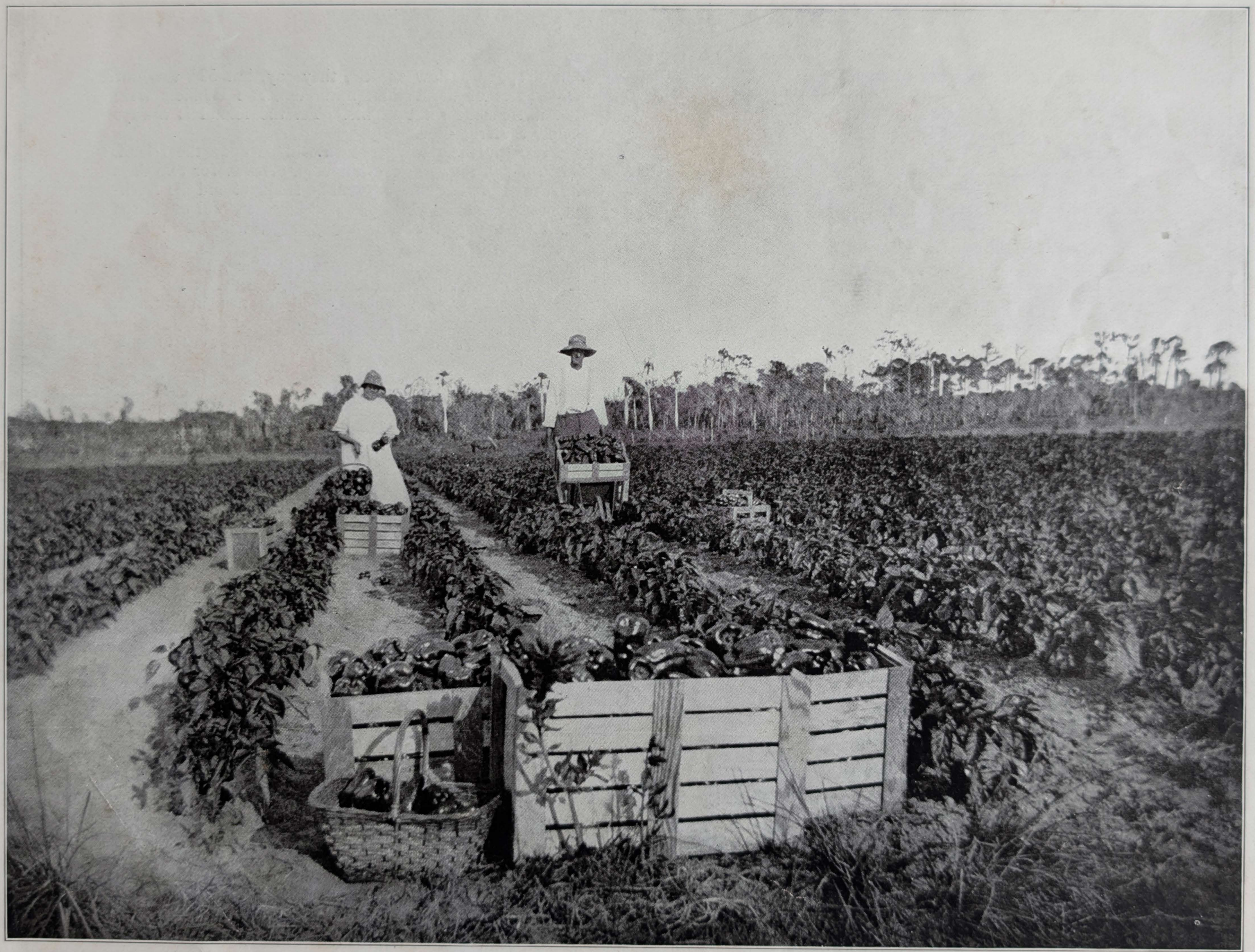
A pleasant winter in a pleasant place, the greatest treasure of which, from the viewpoint of the seeker after recreation, rest, play, health and interest in external things, is its climate, its natural beauty, its history, actual and legendary, and what it offers to the lover of out-door life.

As yet the resort hotel has not developed here as extensively and intensively as in some places where that which would be achieved is spoiled through over-achievement. What the Island provides at present in the way of the usual resort recreation is adequate to the Island as it is at present. Tennis, golf, croquet, wood-walks, riding-parties, auto tours, sea-bathing etc. — all these are here, and no doubt as the Island grows in favor they will be present on a larger scale to meet conditions.

One thing which surprises the explorer is that for once the writers of publicity books have overlooked something, which is that the Island is a happy hunting-ground for sportsmen. True, one hears much of the deep-sea fishing off the South Coast and at the river-mouths. But that is about all.

Yet here is about one of the best places the writer has ever seen for feathered game in season. It should be a paradise for the wing-shot. The whole Island abounds in "bob-white" quail, three or four varieties of wild pigeon (incuding the prized *cabeza blanca*, or whitehead), to say nothing of once-domestic guinea-fowl that have become wild The sea-shores, also, abound in black and other varieties of wild duck.

Deep-sea fishing is usually the main attraction brought to the attention of the visiting sportsman and he may enjoy himself to his heart's content trolling and roping in deep-sea *broncos*—barracouta, stingaree, pompano, king-fish, tarpon, amberjack, Spanish mackerel, etc.—every fish



HARVESTING A WINTER CROP OF PEPPERS

that haunts the Caribbean. Sail-boats or motor launches may be hired with a guide for an outing of this sort.

Fishing here is not a science, but it challenges the scientific angler to come again and try his modern arts upon the big fellows. The streams also abound in splendid fish which, however, are extremely shy. Like trout, they must be unseen and unseeing to be caught. Were the jungle cleared around the deep pools of these brooks so as to allow of fly-casting, these fish might discover that they had found their Nemesis at last.

There is no limit to the fishing in the waters in and around the Isle of Pines. As an example, suppose we take a trip of one day and then, in a few words, a larger trip of two days.

Starting from Nueva Gerona, where boats are always to be had, at 5 a. m. within 30 minutes, right at the river-mouth, your fisherman is liable to take in amberjack and barracouta weighing all the way from 5 to 50 lbs. Then, continuing along the coast in an easterly direction, about a half-mile off Columpo Point he may have all sorts of sport taking in Spanish mackerel and kingfish.

Two and a half hours from Gerona will bring him to the Canal Inglés (English Channel) where the fisherman may either troll or still-fish, and he cannot fail to make a haul of amberjack, tarpon, barracouta and that prize-fish of them all, pompano.

At this point there is a good place to land and have lunch, after which fifteen minutes' sail will bring the fisherman to Canal la Cruz where barracouta abound and not much else.

South from there about two miles is Canal la Landes, which is usually alive with tarpon. This paradise for the tarpon fisherman is about a mile long and only two hundred feet wide.

On the way back past the mouth of the Júcaro River one may repeat the whole performance, getting home to Nueva Gerona in the evening with a big catch and the feeling that it has been a great day.

The two-day trip covers some of this ground but extends to Punta del Este, the eastern point of the South Coast. After passing over the same ground of the one day trip the course lies south by south-east, passing through Canal la Landes to the *cayo*. It is seven and a half hours from Gerona to Punta del Este, but once arrived there there can be no possibility of failure in the way of catching big fish, the limit depending entirely upon the fisherman. When evening comes the party can pull out from the shore and enjoy the sea breezes, fishing by starlight or moonlight with equal success.

After a pleasant night's rest on the deck of the sailing craft or the cockpit of the launch, fishing can be resumed after breakfast in the morning. Usually the start for Gerona is made about noon next day, so as to allow for trolling over the home run.

On the Isle of Pines it is not a question of how many fish one catches as "how big are they?" As for gunning, there is only one limitation — a license fee which ought to be paid with a cheerful smile, for it is just low enough to be worth while and just high enough to keep the natives from possessing guns generally, which results in plentiful game for the visiting sportsman.

ADIOS

May 29th. Most of the so-called "Winter" visitors have flown north with the swallows; yet your explorer has lingered on, troubled none by heat or "rains," which are actually more discomforting in books than in reality.

But tonight this exploration ends. The "Cristobal Colon" has sailed around from Nueva Gerona and is again pointing out of the Júcaro River, her last stop before leaving for Batabanó.

The same genial friendliness of the permanent American residents is present to the last. They come to the ship to make their good-byes. And the last impression is as the first — the American handclasp and the American smile which seems to be of faith in himself and the Island he has chosen for his home.

Presently the search-ray shoots from the roof of the darkened pilot-house. Later, it lingers for a moment (as if for the explorer's last benefit) on the green jungle on either side of the estuary, then flashes to that mark which will guide the vessel out and through the *cayos* — the red arrow, or diamond, on a stake.

And so — *Adios, Isla de Pinos!* Good-bye, "Treasure Island!" Some day, when the long trail grows tiresome and one would find a pleasant corner of earth to work in, to play in, to rest in, then one will — as they said with the handclasp and the smile — "Come again!"

FINIS

OPENING UP A NEW IRON MINE AT MCKINLEY

POTATO FIELD IN THE ISLE OF PINES

TAKING A PLEASURE RIDE UP ONE OF THE RIVERS OF THE ISLE OF PINES

CHILDREN ENJOYING LIFE ON THE ISLE OF PINES

SANTA RITA SPRINGS HOTEL, SANTA FE, ISLE OF PINES

ISLE OF PINES GOLF LINKS

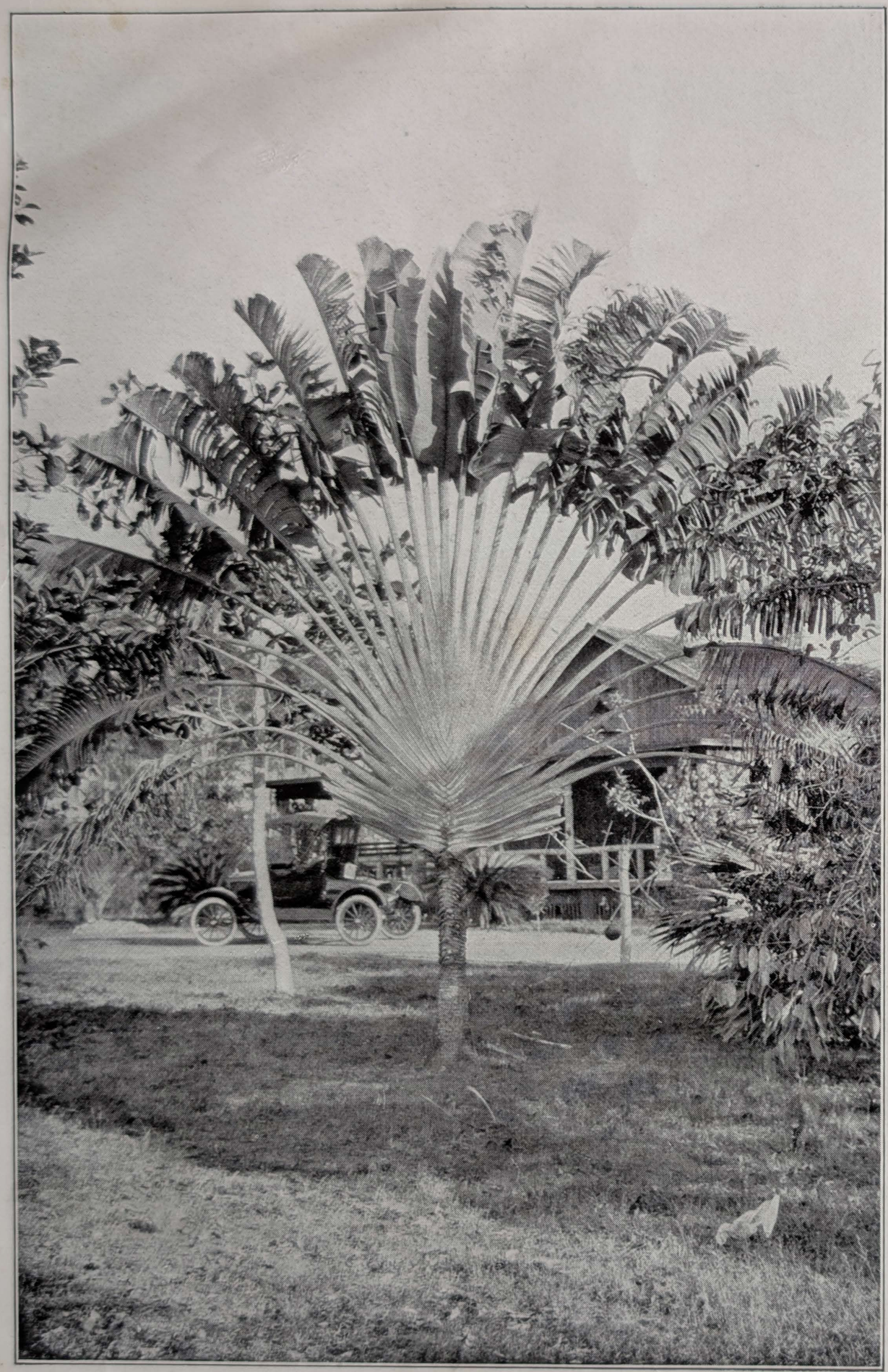
MEMBERS OF HIBISCUS CLUB, SANTA FE, ISLE OF PINES

CHICKENS AND PIGEONS DINE TOGETHER

FISHING IN AN INLAND STREAM

THE FAMOUS SPANISH LAUREL TREE, SANTA FE

PAWPAW-TREE SHOWING HOW PAWPAWS GROW

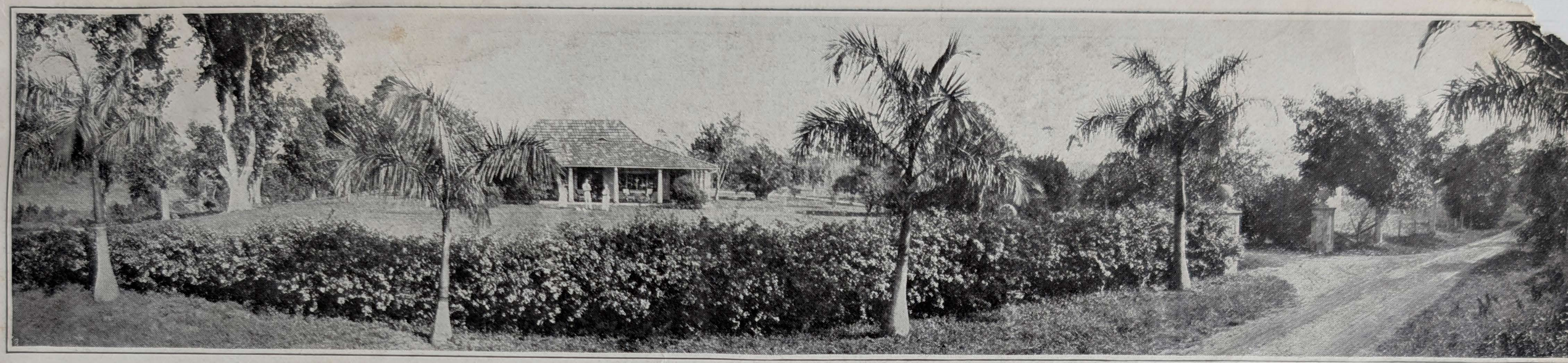


TRAVELERS PALM

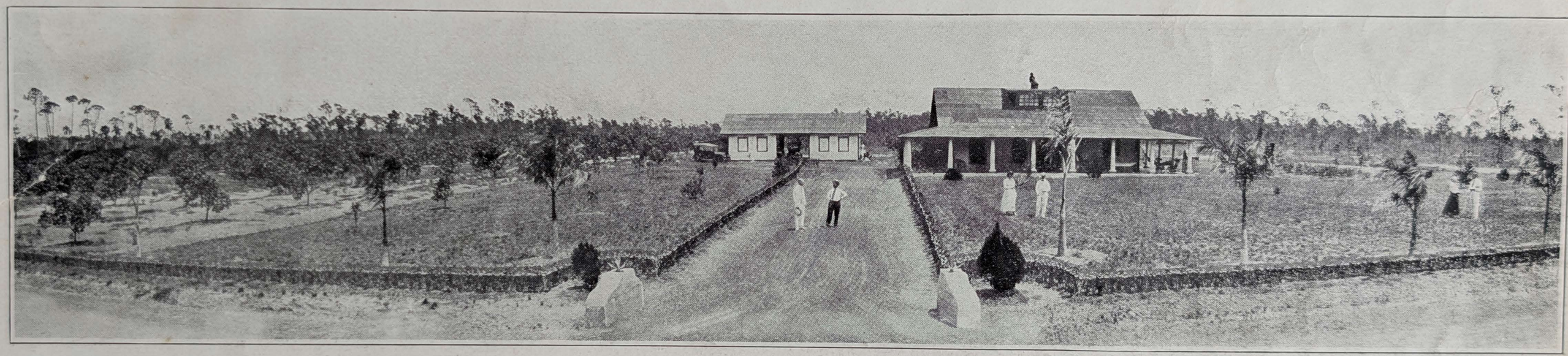
COCOANUT TREE

Harry Jones de Jones Jungle.

CANOEING ON AN ISLE OF PINES RIVER



AMERICAN HOME NEAR SANTA BARBARA, ISLE OF PINES

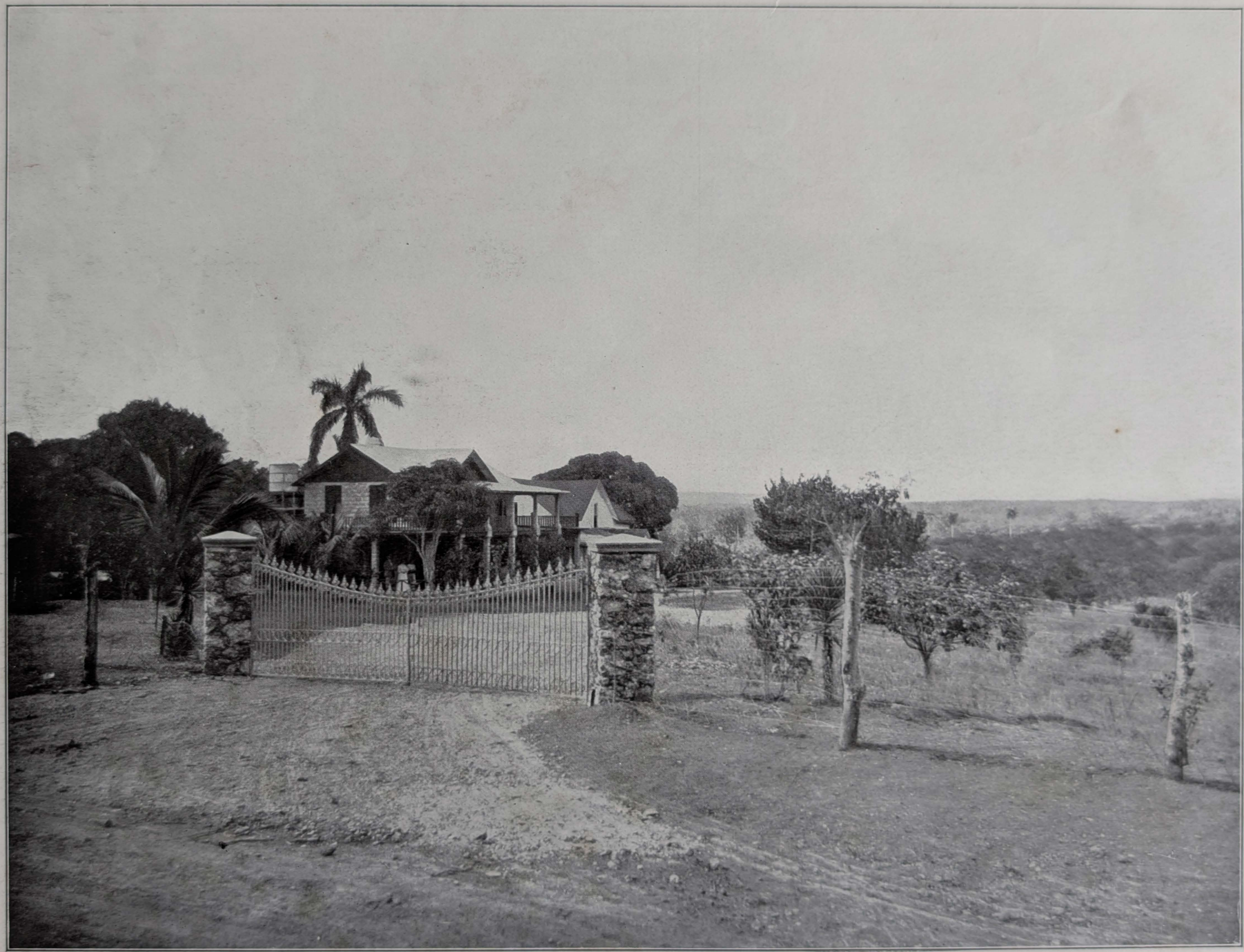


TWO YEARS AFTER BUILDING AND PLANTING SHRUBBERY

ROUNDING UP CATTLE FOR THE MARKET

SCENE ON THE CASAS RIVER

A BATHING SCENE ON THE ISLE OF PINES



AMERICAN RESIDENCE

AMERICAN RESIDENCE

AMERICAN RESIDENCE

AMERICAN RESIDENCE

San Pedro

A SECTION OF A GRAPEFRUIT TREE

FAMILIAR ROAD SCENE

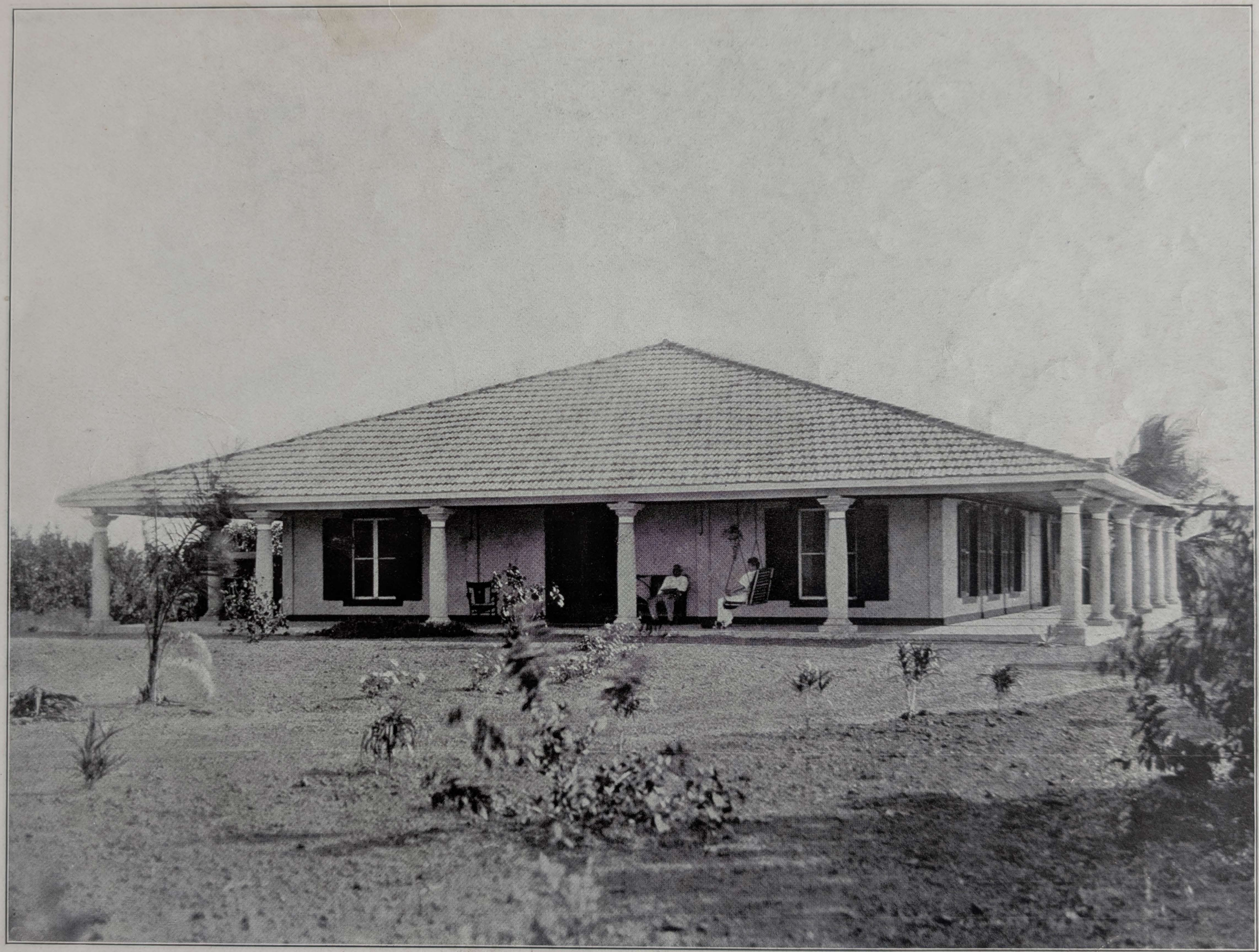
FAMOUS WEYLER SPRINGS, SANTA FE. IT IS SAID THAT GENERAL WEYLER DURING HIS MANY YEARS OF MILITARY RULE IN CUBA VISITED THIS SPRING REGULARLY FOR THE THERMAL BATHS AND REFRESHING MINERAL WATERS

VIEW OF THE STATELY ROYAL PALM TREE

EQUESTRIAN SPORTS, SHOWING GRAPEFRUIT GROVE IN BACKGROUND

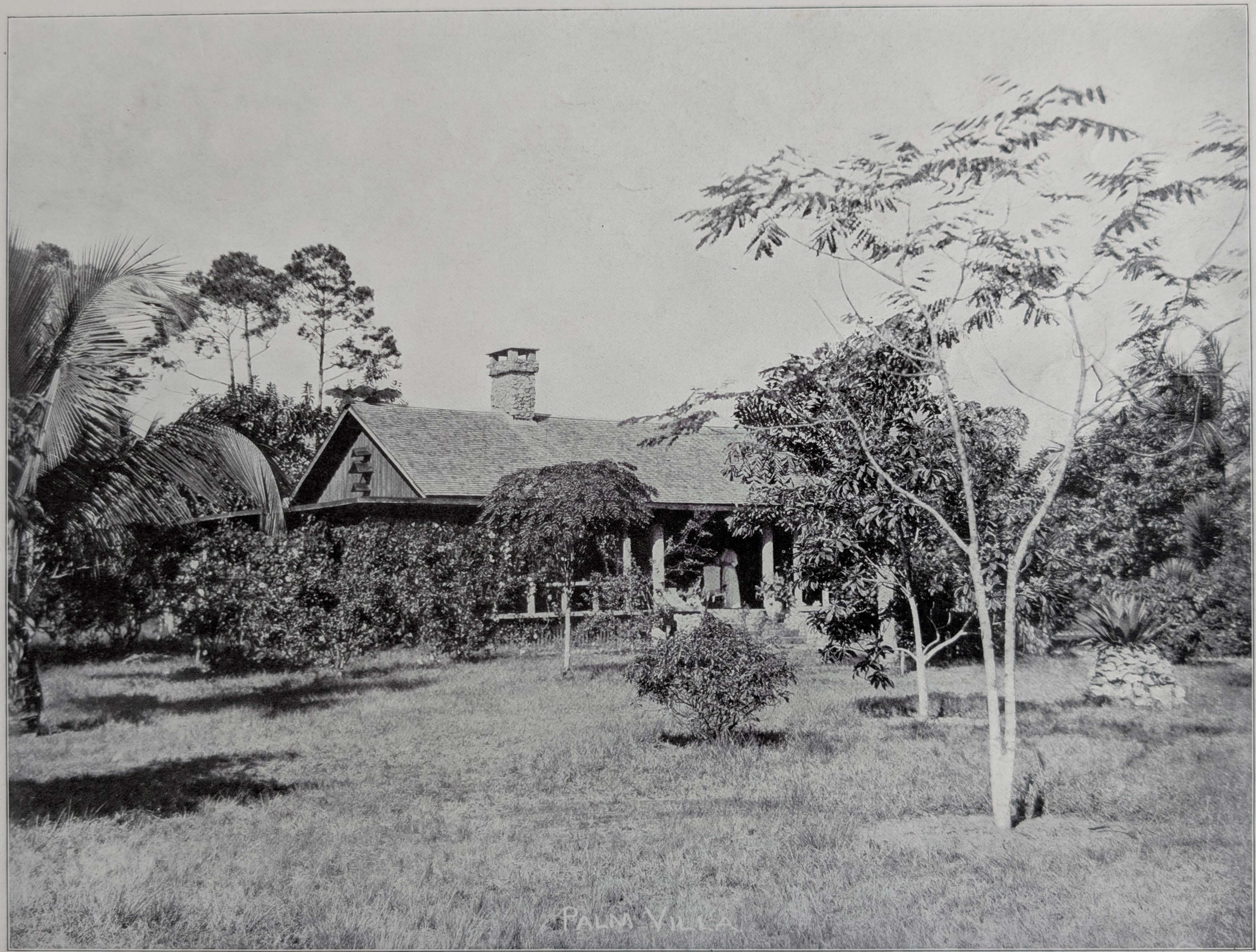
PARTY OF PROMINENT CUBANS TOURING THE ISLE OF PINES

MASONIC TEMPLE, THE HOME OF SANTA FE LODGE F. AND A. M. AND SANTA FE CHAPTER R. A. M.



AMERICAN RESIDENCE

AMERICAN RESIDENCE



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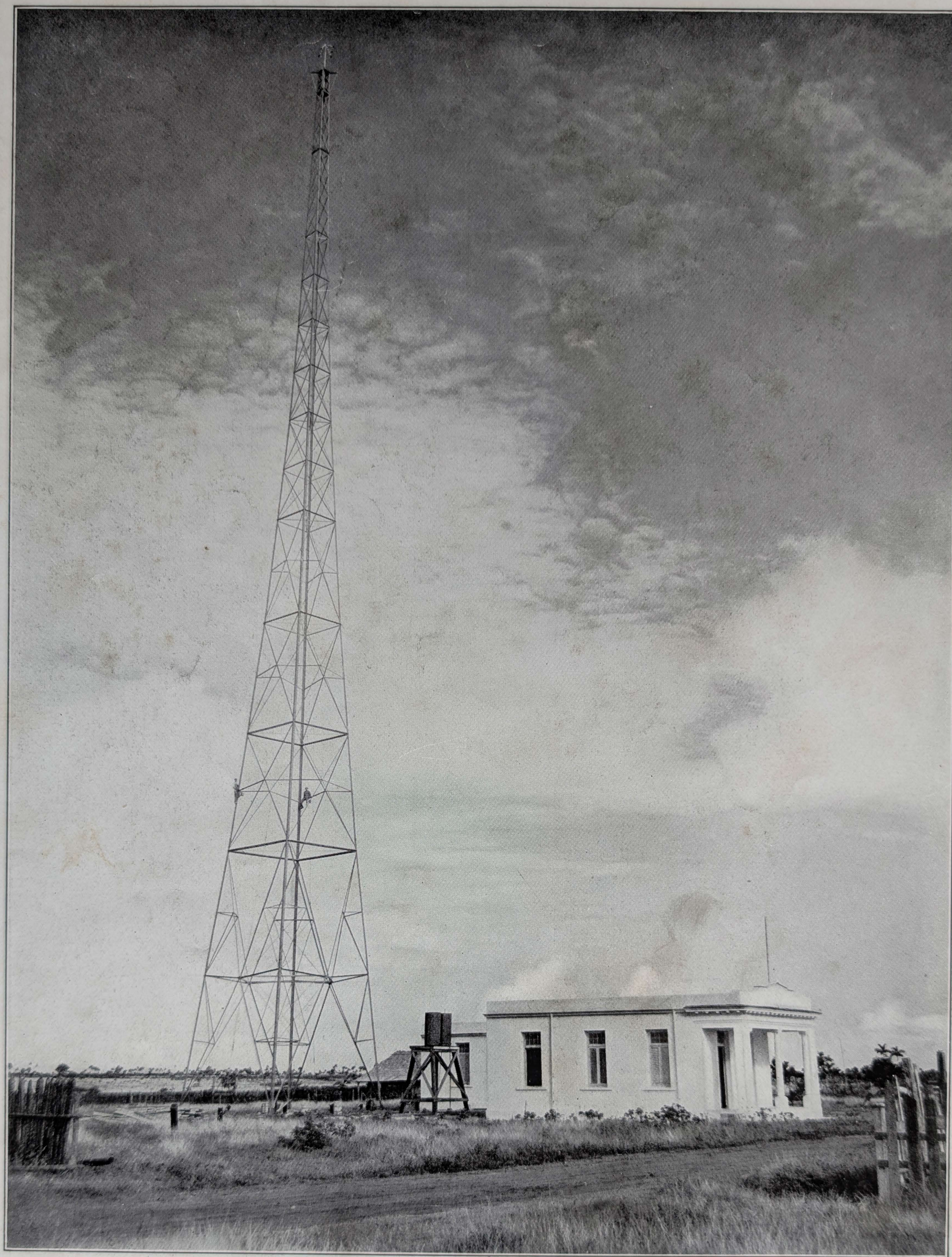


NEW WIRELESS STATION, NUEVA GERONA. (NOT FULLY COMPLETED WHEN THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN)

PART OF THE OFFICE OF THE ISLE OF PINES STEAMSHIP COMPANY

PUPILS AT SAINT JOSEPH'S ACADEMY, NUEVA GERONA

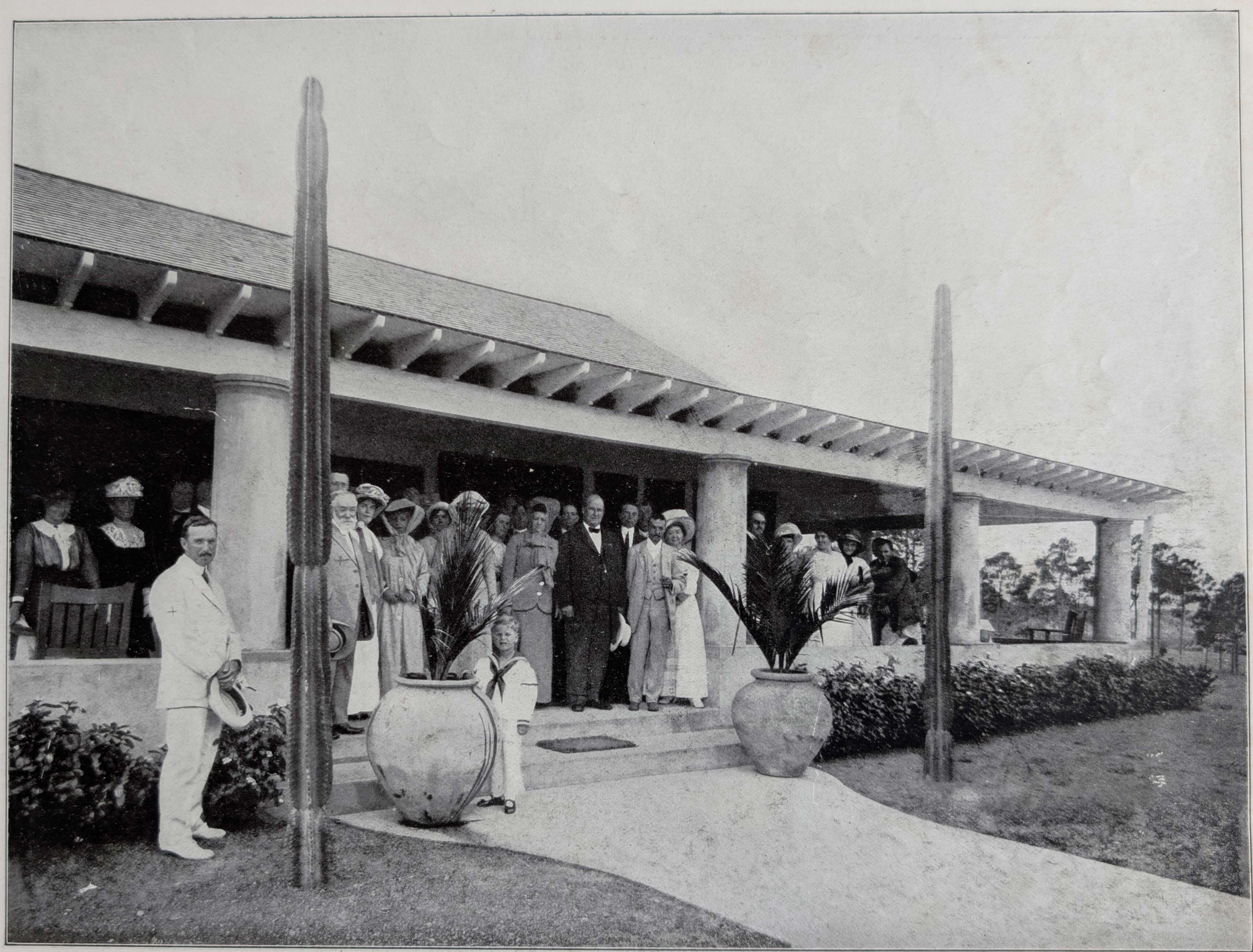
PLAZA, NUEVA GERONA, SHOWING CATHOLIC CHURCH AND ST. JOSEPH'S ACADEMY IN THE BACKGROUND

AMERICAN RESIDENCE

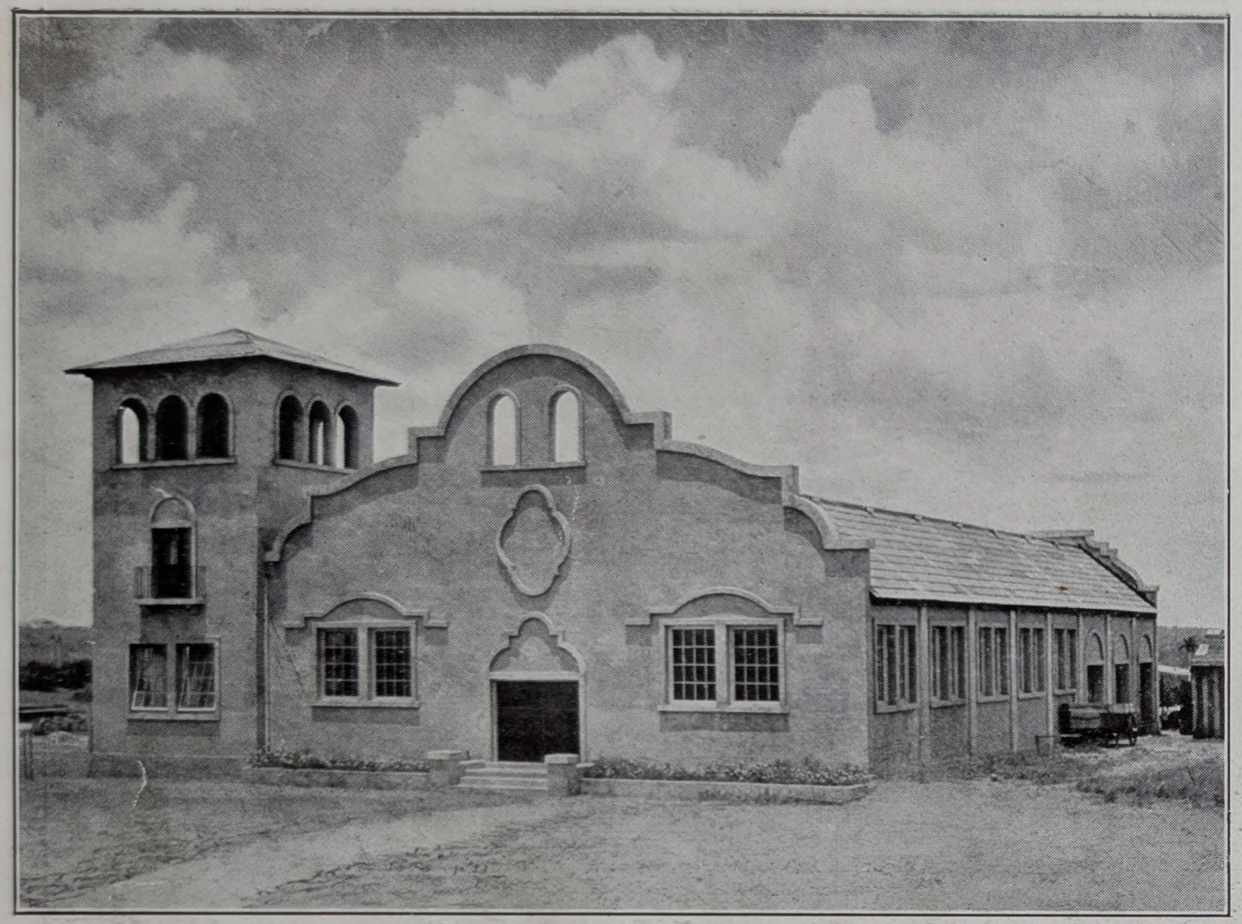
HARVESTING GRAPEFRUIT

SMALL PINEAPPLE FIELD READY TO HARVEST

FINISHING AT THE NINTH HOLE, ISLE OF PINES GOLF CLUB



CLUB HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO HEIGHTS, SHOWING WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN AND MRS. BRYAN



MODERN PACKING HOUSE, SANFRANCISCO HEIGHTS

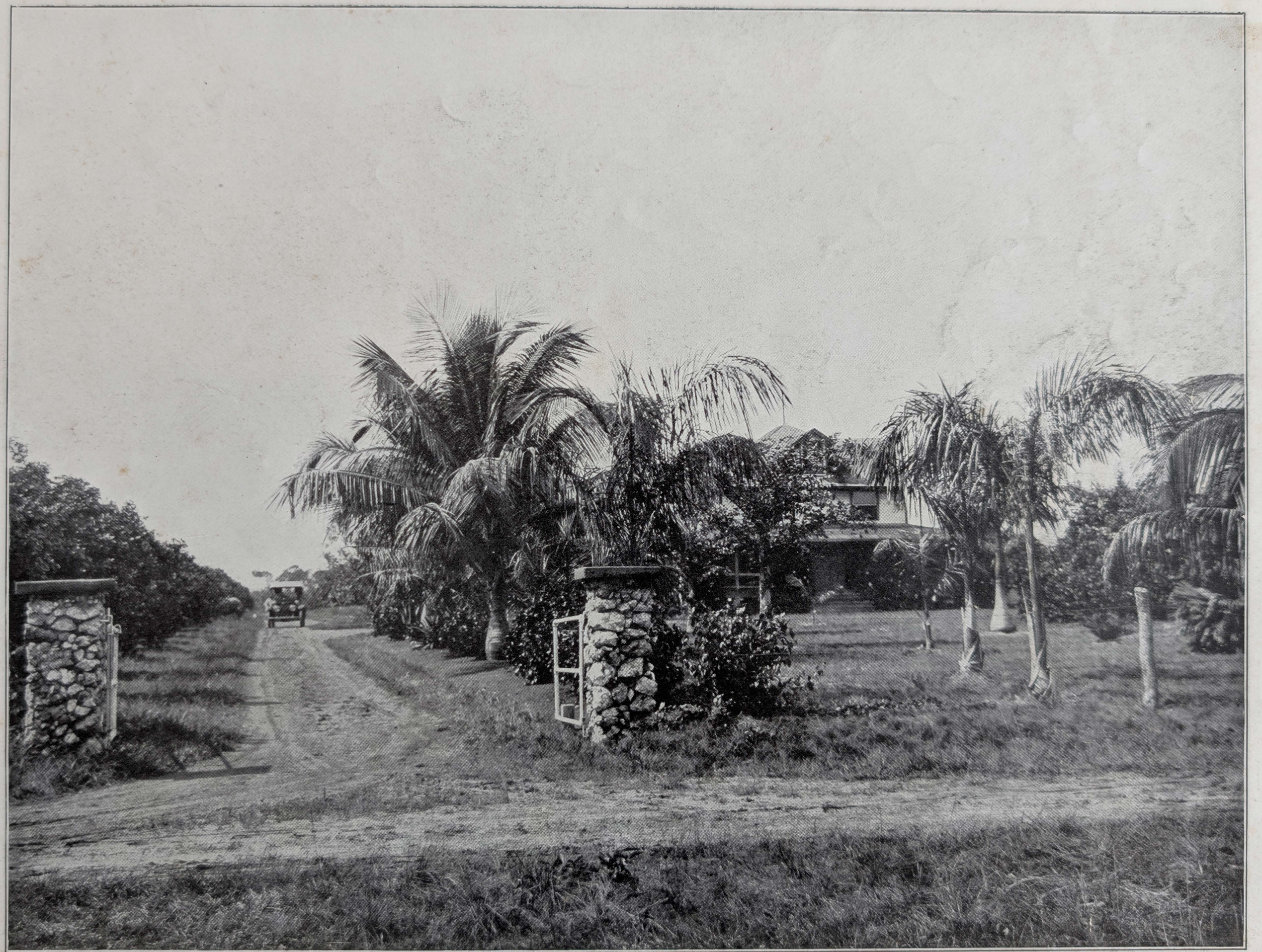
AMERICAN SCHOOL

THE WOMEN ALSO GO FISHING

AMERICAN RESIDENCE AND GROUNDS

VIEW IN A HUNDRED ACRE GRAPEFRUIT GROVE

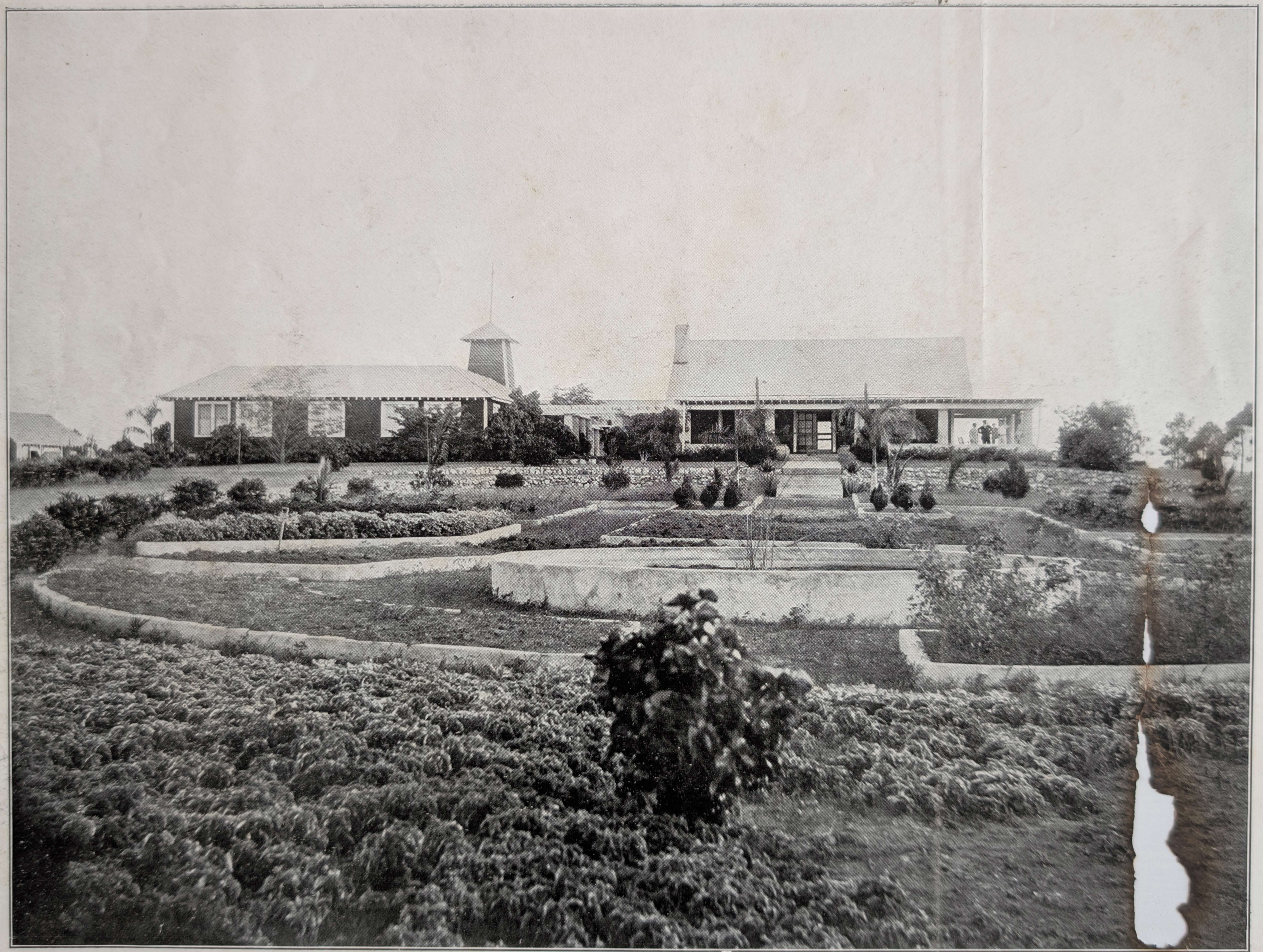
AMERICAN RESIDENCE



AMERICAN RESIDENCE SURROUNDED BY A GRAPEFRUIT GROVE

MOONLIGHT ON THE CARIBBEANOFF THE SHORES OF THE ISLE OF PINES

RETURNING FROM A LITTLE OUTING. NOTE THE LOBSTERS ON THE GROUND NEAR THE AUTOMOBILE



CLUB HOUSE SAN FRANCISCO HEIGHTS

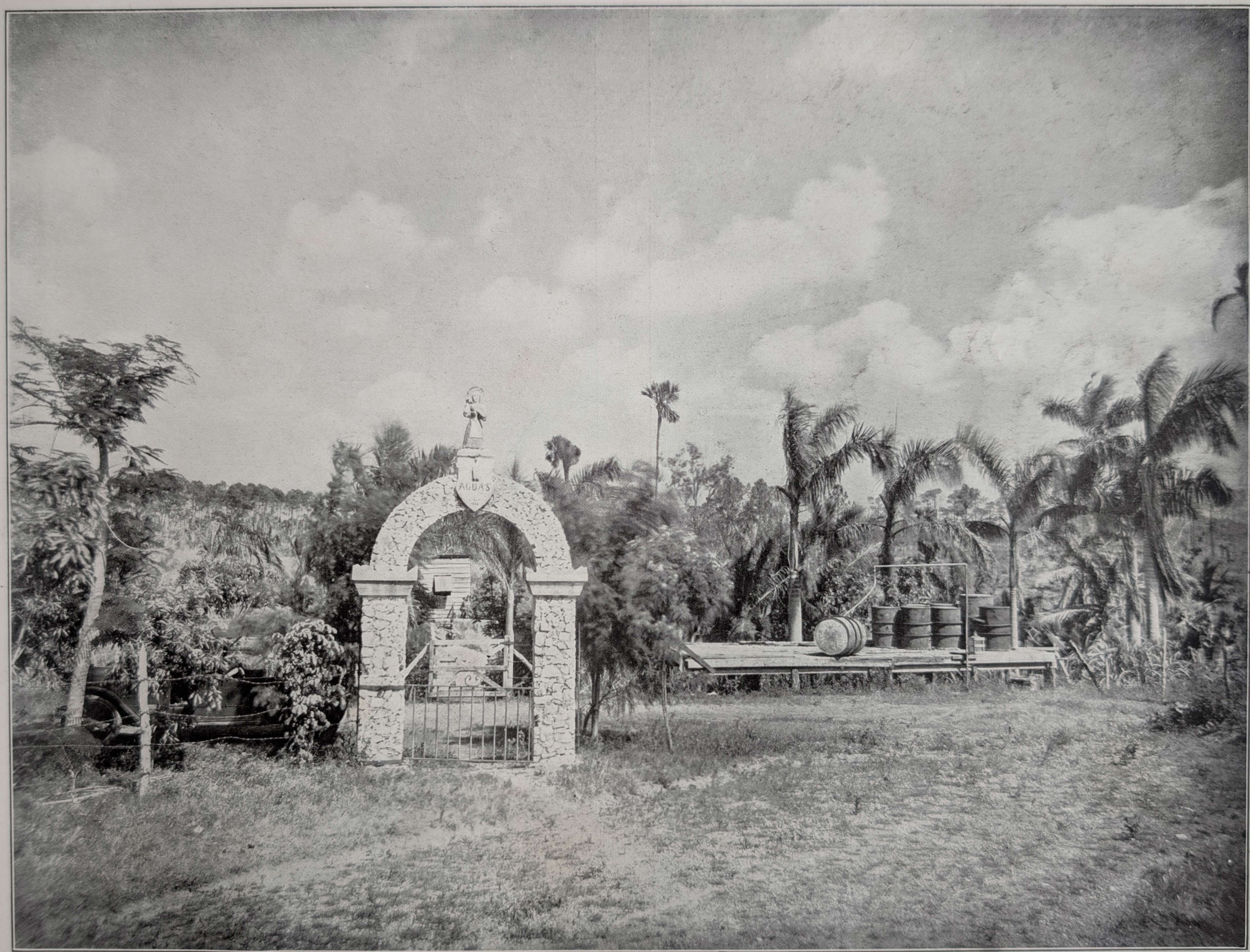
SHOWING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GOVERNMENT BRIDGES ON THE ISLE OF PINES

SANTA BARBARA INN, SANTA BARBARA, ISLE OF PINES

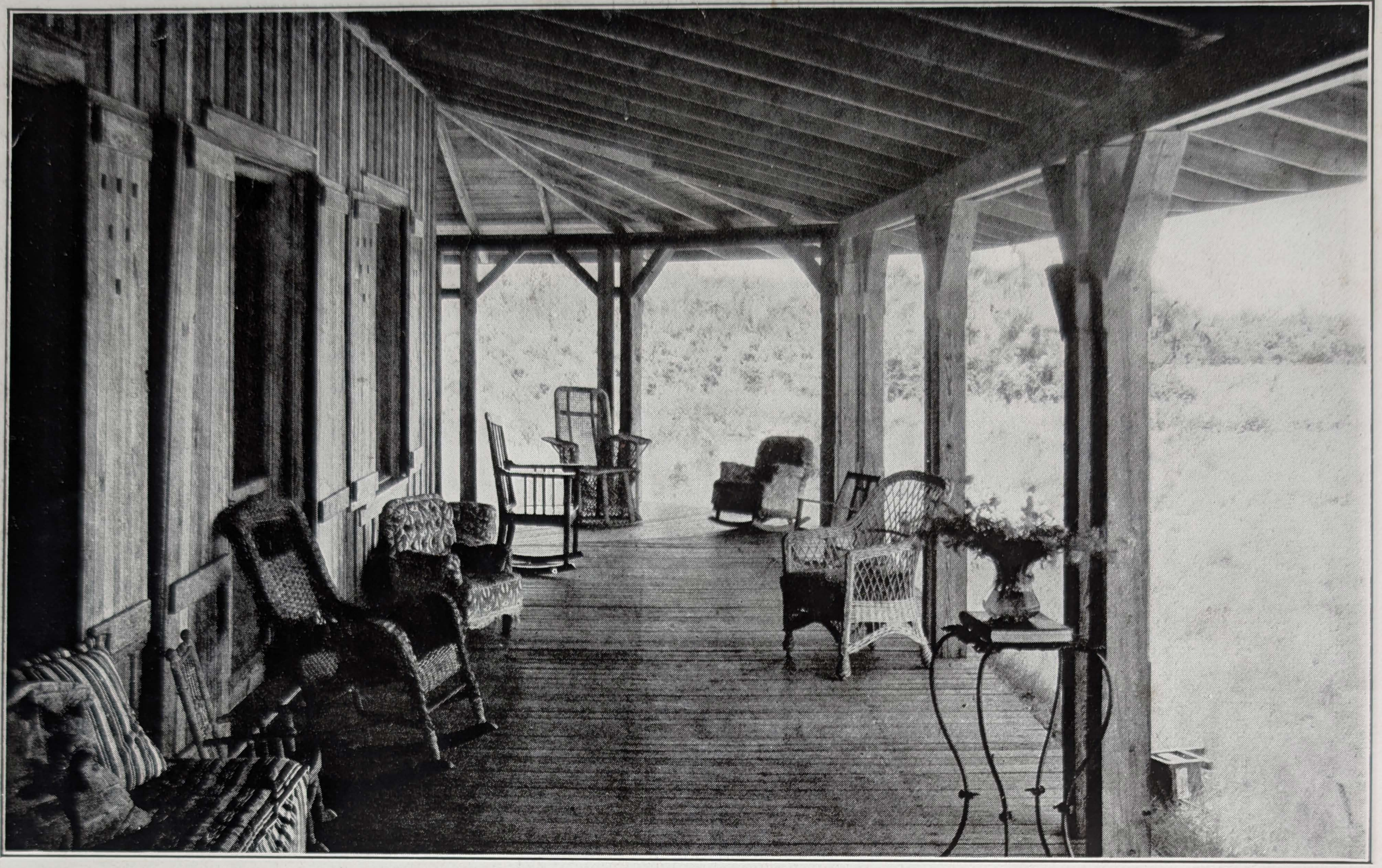
STORE AND POSTOFFICE, SANTA BARBARA

FAMOUS SANTA RITA SPRINGS, SANTA FE, NOTED FOR ITS THERMAL BATHS AND MEDICINAL WATERS

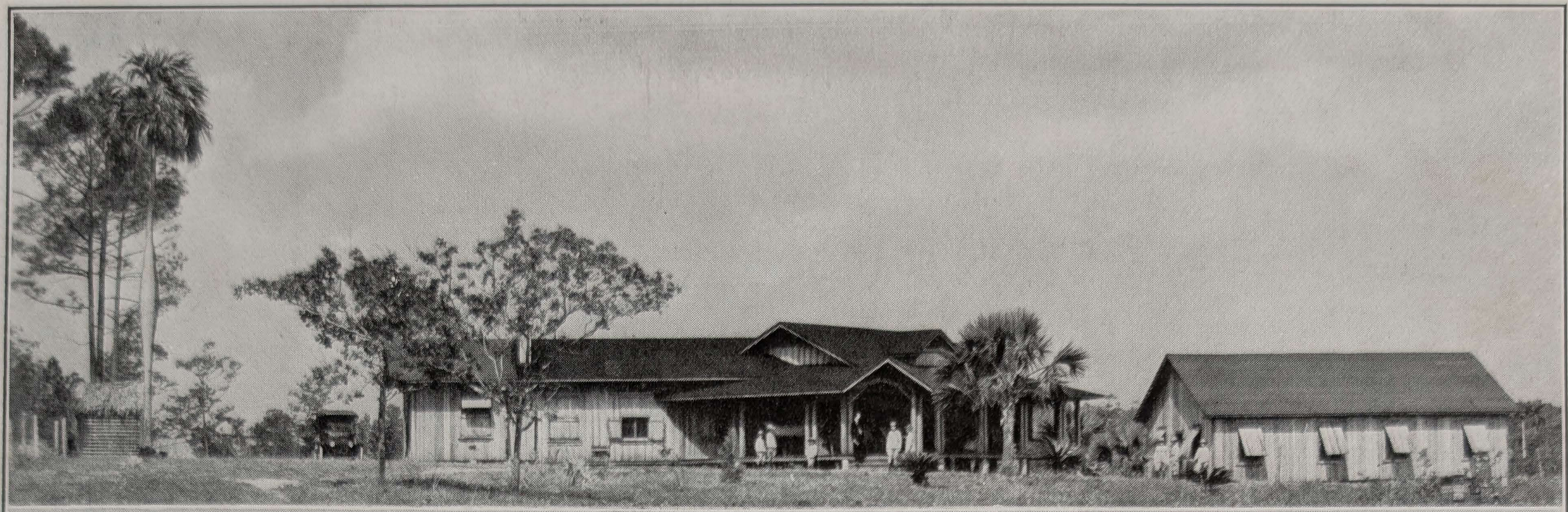
OLD SANTA FE HOTEL, SANTA FE

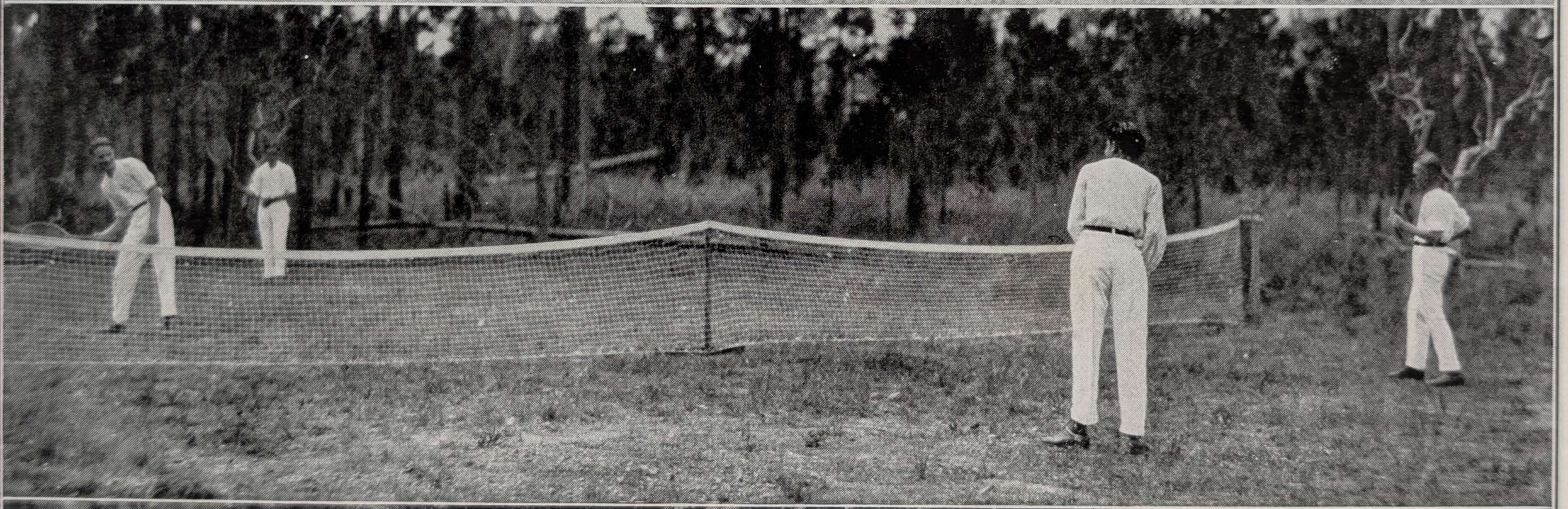


TANKING THE FAMOUS ISLE OF PINES SPRING WATER FOR SHIPMENT TO HAVANA WHERE MILLIONS OF BOTTLES ARE SOLD ANNUALLY AS A BEVERAGE

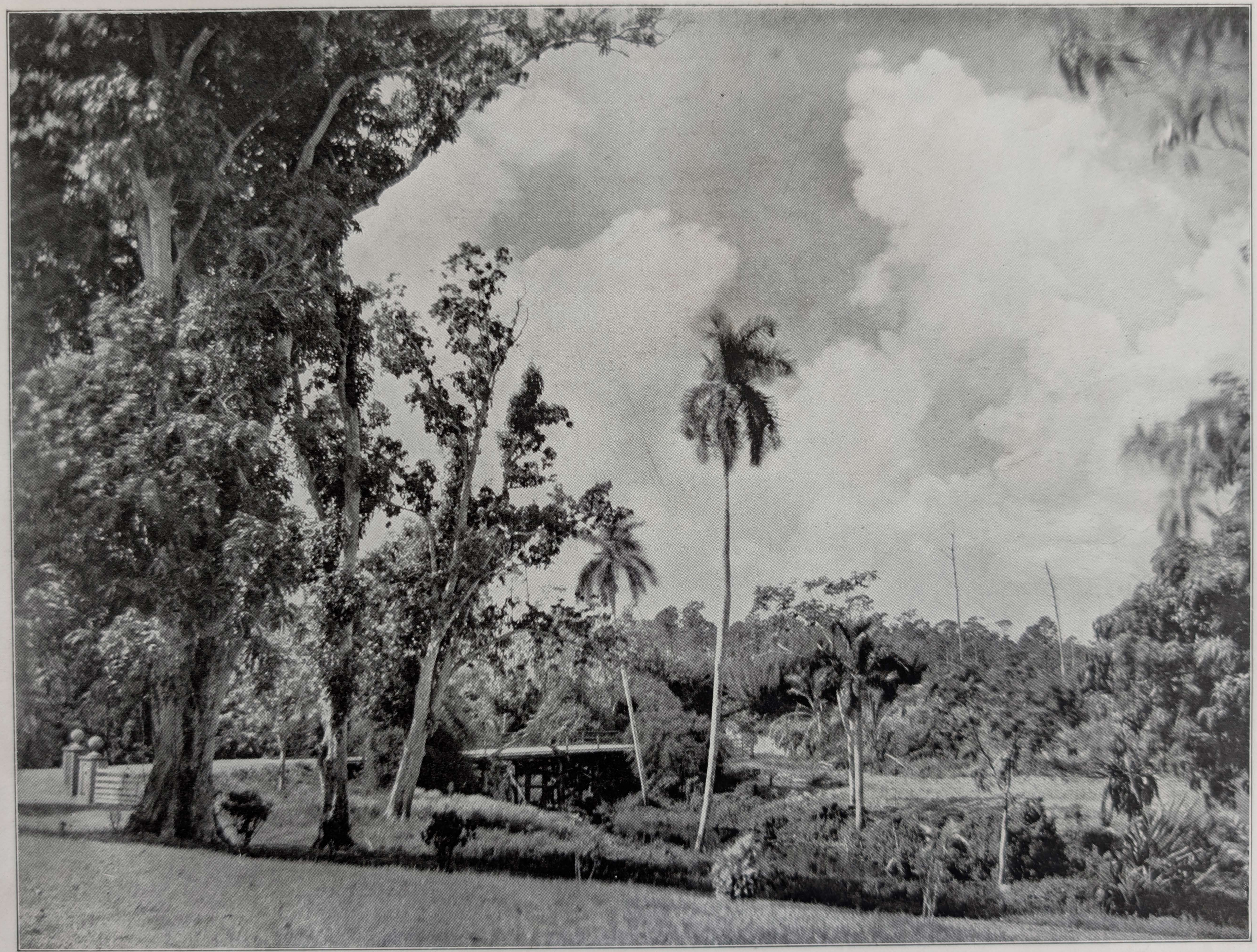


SECTION OF THE PORCH AND LIVING QUARTERS OF THE MAC MAHON MILITARY SCHOOL

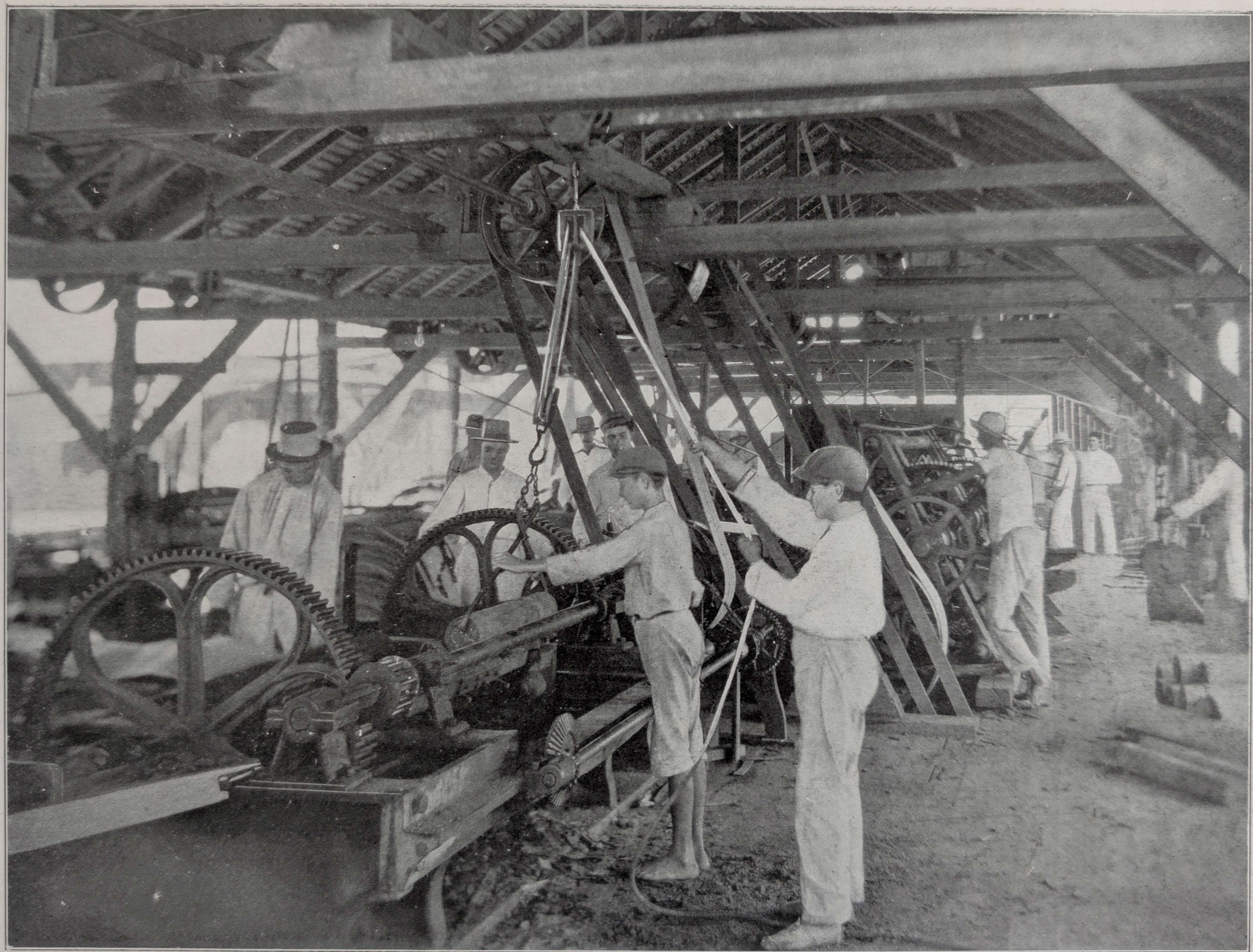




(1) LIVING QUARTERS AND DORMITORY OF THE MAC MAHON MILITARY SCHOOL, SANTA BARBARA. FIRST YEAR OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SCHOOL. (2) CLASS EXERCISES. (3) LAWN TENNIS. (4) SWIMMING POOL IN THE NUEVAS RIVER CONNECTED WITH THE MAC MAHON MILITARY SCHOOL



SCENE NEAR SANTA BARBARA



MANUFACTURING PINEAPPLE CRATES

How to reach the Isle of Pines from Havana
And the winter schedule of the Isle of Pines Steamship Company.
(Usually from August to June)

Leave Central Station (the only station in Havana) at 6:10 P. M. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, arriving at Batabanó (see map) about 8 o'clock; train runs to wharf where passengers leave train and board ship. (Dinner ready to serve). Ship sails about 8:30 arriving at Júcaro (the port for Santa Fé), about 5 o'clock A. M.—Arrive at Nueva Gerona, the steamship terminal (the port for Santa Ana, Santa Barbara, McKinley and Los Indias), at about 7:30 A. M. (Coffee and light breakfast a la carte). Automobiles meet all boats at both Júcaro and Nueva Gerona where they may be hired at reasonable prices for all parts of the Island.

Returning

Leave Nueva Gerona at 4 o'clock P. M. Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays: (Dinner served from 5:30 to 8:30) leave Júcaro about 8; arriving at Batabanó about 5:30 A. M. (Coffee and light breakfast a la carte). Train leaves wharf at 6:15, arriving in Havana at 8:15.

Cost of trip from Havana

Present fares (subject to change) Havana to Isle of Pines or vice versa $7.50; berth in stateroom $1.50; dinner, 90 cents; light breakfast "A la carte."

MACMAHON MILITARY SCHOOL

The MacMahon Military School, located at Santa Barbara, is situated on the highlands overlooking the Nuevas River and commands a beautiful and extended view to the mountains at the gates of the old Spanish town of Nueva Gerona.

The School, founded in 1918, is a non-sectarian school for boys, having a lower and upper school, the former for boys from seven to thirteen years of age, the latter a Technical Preparatory School for College or business. The life, the work, the activities, all are directed toward the development of the individual boy. Each boy comes to feel that he is a vital part of the daily life of the school.

The aim of the school is to give each boy such careful individual attention that whatever is deficient in him shall be corrected, and whatever is best in him shall be brought out, to stimulate his desire to excel by completely filling the day with healthful and refining pursuits, and to interest the whole boy the whole day.

Temperature for a Period of Seven Years

	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
	Max. Min.	Max. Min.	Max. Min.	Max. Min.	Max. Min.	Max. Min.	Max. Min.
Jan'y...	83°–64°	82°–64°	80°–63°	81°–62°	80°–64°	82°–66°	80°–65°
Feb'y...	82°–62°	80°–61°	81°–65°	80°–64°	81°–65°	82°–64°	84°–69°
Mar....	87°–72°	85°–69°	84°–71°	86°–69°	86°–70°	85°–68°	87°–73°
Ap'l....	88°–73°	86°–72°	87°–73°	86°–71°	88°–72°	87°–71°	87°–73°
May....	89°–77°	87°–76°	88°–75°	89°–77°	88°–77°	89°–75°	87°–76°
June....	90°–78°	91°–79°	91°–79°	90°–78°	91°–77°	90°–79°	87°–77°
July....	92°–78°	92°–77°	92°–77°	91°–79°	92°–78°	89°–77°	94°–78°
Aug.....	91°–73°	91°–77°	90°–75°	92°–74°	91°–76°	91°–72°	91°–78°
Sept....	90°–77°	92°–78°	91°–76°	92°–78°	90°–76°	93°–77°	91°–78°
Oct.....	88°–76°	87°–75°	88°–78°	87°–76°	89°–77°	87°–77°	89°–79°
Nov....	84°–68°	84°–69°	83°–71°	82°–70°	81°–74°	85°–66°	84°–72°
Dec.....	81°–68°	80°–69°	79°–67°	80°–69°	81°–68°	78°–65°	81°–74°

Rainfall for a Period of Seven Years. General Average 71.73 Inches

	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Jan'y...	2.70	.86	4.02	3.05	.00	.00	.49
Feb'y...	2.73	6.85	4.03	6.03	.00	.10	.20
Mar....	3.15	2.42	.04	3.08	.64	1.42	12.01
Ap'l....	5.83	4.77	10.08	3.00	8.42	4.01	3.14
May....	10.58	13.31	10.09	3.08	3.32	4.40	8.23
June....	20.11	16.05	10.04	11.03	11.06	12.39	4.42
July....	3.68	6.25	5.03	11.95	9.64	8.20	6.79
Aug.....	8.56	5.75	7.01	10.48	6.55	11.89	7.23
Sept....	7.72	6.05	8.03	15.07	9.41	16.18	7.51
Oct.....	8.56	5.04	17.08	9.49	7.20	7.13	11.60
Nov....	.08	1.04	.00	3.19	3.42	2.39	1.11
Dec.....	1.15	.00	2.00	4.45	.11	3.75	3.61
	74.35	68.39	77.45	83.90	59.77	71.86	66.34

CORNER IN A CANNING FACTORY NEAR SANTA BARBARA

PICNIC PARTY ON THE BEACH

The Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, Nueva Gerona, Isle of Pines, W. I., will send a copy of this book to any address, post paid, on receipt of One Dollar.